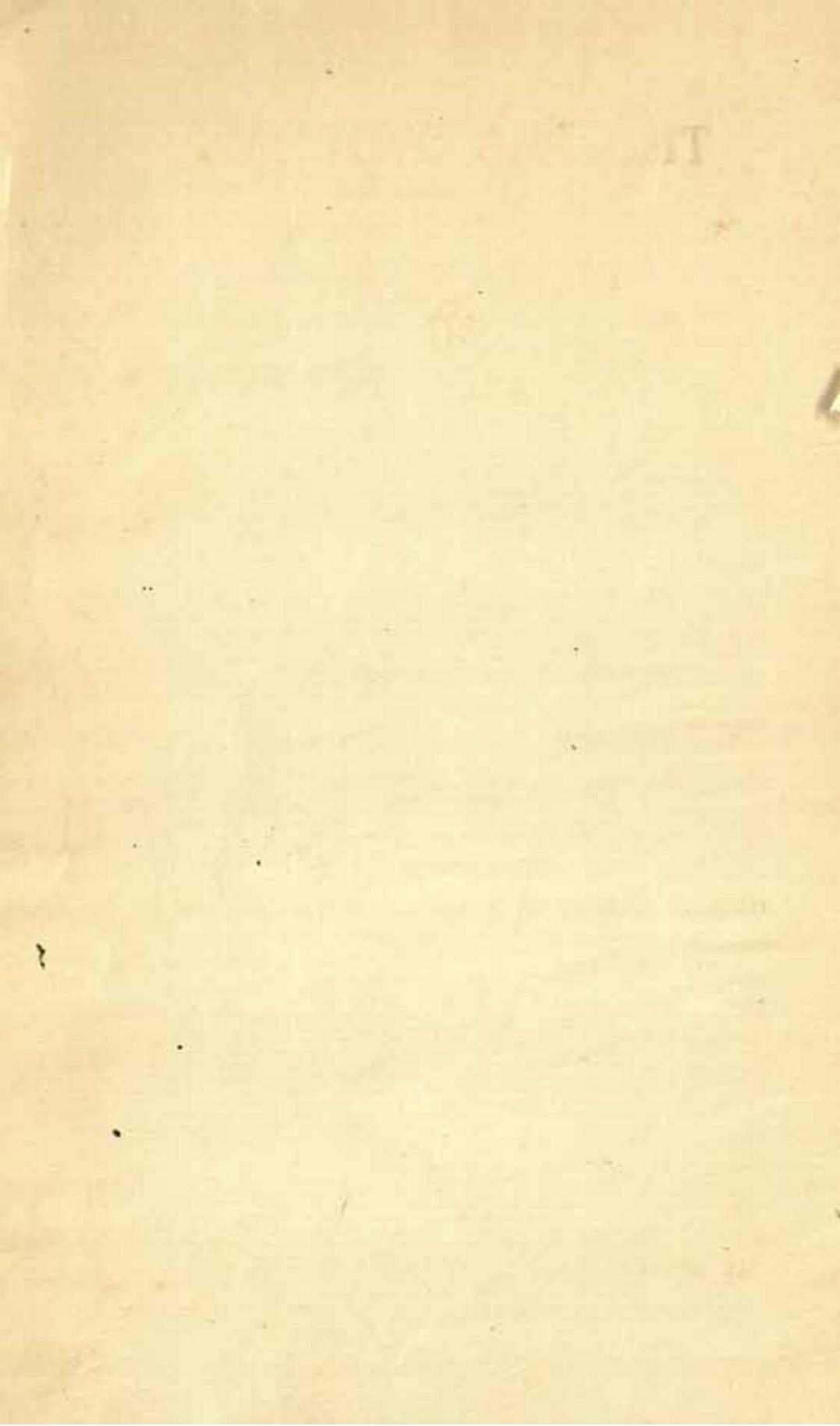


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THE PHILOSOPHY OF RĀMĀNUJA



By

Dr KRISHNA DATTA BHARADWAJ
SHASTRI, ACHARYA, M.A., PH.D.

16630

Foreword by

HON'BLE SHRI M. ANANTHASAYANAM AYYANGAR
Speaker of the House of the People of India

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FOREWORD

I have great pleasure in recommending this book on 'The Philosophy of Rāmānuja' written by Dr. Bharadwaj to scholars, students and the general public.

Modern Hinduism is largely based on the teachings of five great South Indian scholarly saints, viz., Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Nimbarka and Vallabha. Though there are as many followers of Visiṣṭādvaita school of philosophy and religion propounded by Śrī Rāmānuja as those following the philosophy of Śaṅkara, yet that philosophy has not been so widely made known to the public as the Advaita philosophy of Śaṅkara.

At a time when Buddhism was followed by a large section of the population in this country, Śaṅkara re-established the authority of the Vedas and the Vedantic religion which is commonly called Hinduism. Differing from Lord Buddha who rejected the authority of the Vedas and laid greater emphasis on 'dharma' to be followed by individuals in their relations to one another than on devotion to God or on aspiring to reach Him, Śaṅkara went to the other extreme and interpreted the Vedas, the main authority of the Hindu religion and philosophy, as establishing that God alone exists and the world is unreal and is an illusion. Rāmānuja, who followed Śaṅkara three centuries later, tried to prove from the same sources, that the world is real, that God is immanent in creation and transcendent also, that besides Him there is matter and there are individual souls which are also eternal like Himself and which He inhabits and permeates as an individual Soul dwells in a body, thus proving in substance that God alone exists and that He should be conceived as consisting of Himself as the Soul with the individual souls and matter as His body. Unlike Śaṅkara, he does not attribute *maya* or ignorance to God but only to the individual soul, on account of which the soul goes on undergoing innumerable births and deaths. Though both to Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara, *mokṣa* or release from the cycle of births and deaths is the ultimate goal for all souls to attain, they differ as regards the means of attaining *mokṣa* and in the nature of *mokṣa* itself. Śaṅkara believes that knowledge alone is the means to attain salvation, that action and devotion constitute the preparation to the attainment of such knowledge and his idea of *mokṣa* is simple freedom from the

liability to births and deaths. On the other hand, to Rāmānuja Bhakti or devotion is the only means of attaining salvation, Karma or action and Jñāna or knowledge are the pre-requisites to the attainment of that bhakti, and mokṣa or release is not merely the non-liability to further births and deaths but it is the possible attainment of God who is bliss itself.

Men of thought, both eastern and western, have acclaimed the greatness of Rāmānuja's teachings. Swāmi Vivekānanda wrote, "Shankara with his great intellect had not, I am afraid, as great a heart; Rāmānuja's heart was greater. He felt for the down-trodden, he sympathised with them. He took up the ceremonies, the accretions that had gathered, made them pure as far as could be, and instituted new ceremonies, new methods of worship for the people, who absolutely required these. At the same time he opened the door to the highest spiritual worship from the Brahmin to the Pariah."

Max Muller wrote, "We ought, therefore, to look on Rāmānuja as a perfect equal of Shankara, so far as his right of interpreting Bādarāyaṇa's sutras according to his opinion is concerned. It is the same here as everywhere in Hindu philosophy. The individual philosopher is put the mouth-piece of tradition, and that tradition goes back, further and further, the more we try to fit it chronologically. While Shankara's system is Advaita i.e., absolute Monism, that of Rāmānuja has been called Vishishtā-Advaita, the doctrine of unity with attributes, or monism with a difference."

Many ardent exponents have propounded Rāmānuja's system during the last eight centuries. And in the following pages Dr. K D. Bharadwaj is making the most recent contribution to the bibliography of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism.

- The absence of religion which has been a feature of Indian education in modern times has been deplored by even western observers. Sixty years ago Max Muller wrote, "It is feared, however, that this small remnant of philosophical learning will vanish in one or two generations, as the youths of the present day, even if belonging to orthodox Brahmanical families, do not take to these studies as there is no encouragement."

Earlier still, H.J.S. Cotton wrote, "Our State Colleges are content with chaos; their results are subversive only; the old belief is thrown off, the consequent disturbance issues in no real substitute, and the mental and moral state suffers from negation."

Denouncing a similar state of affairs in Europe, Martin Luther wrote four centuries ago, "Yea, verily, there have been holy men, but God's wrath, provoked by our sins, hath not judged us worthy to see and hear them; for it is well known that for a long time past such things have not been treated of in our universities, nay, it has gone so far that the holy word of God is not only laid on the shelf, but is almost moulded away with dust and months."

The things complained of by Luther, Max Muller and Cotton in their times, are prevailing even today.

Under the gathering darkness, it is commendable that Dr. Bharadwaj seeks to light a lamp to shed illumination, by bringing out an easily understandable account, both compact and comprehensive, of Śrī Rāmānuja's great religion. Dr. Bharadwaj is eminently fitted to write about Rāmānuja's philosophy, being himself a great follower and devotee of Śrī Rāmānuja. His educational attainments are many, and he is a great scholar of Sanskrit. His 'Para-Tattva-Sutram' is an original work in Sanskrit and 'Vanamāla' is an exhaustive commentary on the Para-Tattva-Sutram. He has also written a commentary on the Brahma-Sutra in Hindi prose and poetry.

In the present work he attempts to give a lucid and faithful exposition of the teachings of Rāmānuja as contained in his monumental works such as Śrī Bhāṣya, Gitā Bhāṣya, Vedārtha-Saṅgraha, Gadyatraya etc. He starts with a life-sketch of Rāmānuja in his introductory chapter, and then he deals with the devotional philosophy of Śrī Rāmānuja. He describes therein how Rāmānuja's system has been developed on the basis of the teachings propounded by eminent thinkers of the ancient lore such as Bodhāyana, Tāṇka, Dramida and Guhadeva. Śrī Rāmānuja himself states in clear terms at the commencement of his Śrī Bhāṣya that he is commenting on the Vedānta Sutras in accordance with the doctrines contained in Bodhāyana-vṛtti, which had been preserved from the ancient past by his earlier acāryas. It is, therefore, an ancient system which was given re-orientation by Śrī Rāmānuja. The author also shows how Rāmānuja drew much of his inspiration from the Divya-Prabandham, the devotional songs of Śrī Vaiṣṇavas of South India, one of whom is said to have sung the essence of upaniṣads in Tamil Prabandham or in Tamil verses. The authority of the Pañcarātra has also been referred to by Dr. Bharadwaj.

The philosophy of Rāmānuja is characterised as Visiṣṭādvaita. The word signifies that the Ultimate Reality (Para-tattva) is an integral whole comprising the cit or sentient beings and acit or the inert matter, both of which constitute the body of Iṣvara. Rāmānuja admits three entities, *viz.*, Iṣvara, who is the Supreme Reality, cit which are the individual selves (jīvas) and acit, the matter. All the three are real entities, and exist for ever (nitya). These do not constitute three independent realities, otherwise it would lead to pluralism. Cit and acit depend upon Iṣvara for their existence, and, as such, they are subservient to Him. Iṣvara is the basis (ādhāra) for the entire universe consisting of cit and acit. The relationship of the former to the latter is that of the self to the body. The cit and acit constitute the body of Iṣvara, while Iṣvara Himself is the self of them. This relationship is called 'Śarira-śarīrī-bhāva sambandha.' This is the cardinal principle of Rāmānuja's philosophy, which constitutes the distinguishing factor of the Visiṣṭādvaita system of Philosophy. This is the most important contribution made by Śri Rāmānuja, and this is based upon the upaniṣadic teachings. Although there are three different real entities, the three constitute an integral whole. To give an illustration, a tree is divided into parts such as roots, trunk and branches. Each part is different from the other, but, nevertheless, the tree as a whole constitutes one entity. Similarly, Brahman associated with cit and acit is one (viṣiṣṭasya aikyam). The philosophy of Śri Rāmānuja is, therefore, called Visiṣṭādvaita, as compared to the Advaita of Śaṅkara.

The significance of the above doctrine lies in the fact that it accords reality to both the universe and the individual selves. In Śaṅkara's system the universe consisting of the individual selves and the matter is regarded as illusory (māya). Rāmānuja disproves the theory of māya and establishes the reality of the universe and also maintains oneness of the Reality as an integral whole without sacrificing the individualities of the selves as well as the matter.

Another contribution of Rāmānuja's philosophy is the identity established between the Absolute of the Upaniṣads and the Personal God of the religion. The Brahman is no other than the God experienced by the mystic saints. He is the Puruṣottama. He possesses infinite measure of knowledge (jñāna) and ananda, and is devoid of all inauspicious qualities. He is characterised by unlimited auspicious qualities such as knowledge and power. He has a divine, auspicious form, and has as His bodies, the eternal and play-worlds.

He is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. He is everywhere in the universe and also resides in the hearts of individuals (antaryāmin). Such a teaching has an appeal to the heart and gives nourishment to the head also.

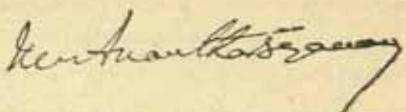
The individual selves are separate entities, although they depend on God for their existence. There are three kinds of souls : bound, released, and eternally free. The self is *āṇu*, and is essentially of the nature of knowledge and bliss. It is the knower and enjoyer of the fruits of Karma. Though it is omniscient in its true nature, the knowledge of the self is restricted due to the encrustations of the past Karma. As long as the self is associated with the body, the knowledge functions only in a restricted way. The self undergoes the cycle of births and deaths. It is only after it is emancipated, that there is real freedom for the self from bondage.

In order to get rid of the bondage, the self will have to pursue the means prescribed by the sacred texts for attaining salvation. According to Śrī Rāmānuja, bhakti or steadfast contemplation of God preceded by the Karma-yoga and Jñāna-yoga as taught in the Bhagavad-gītā is the true means of attaining the supreme goal. For those who are not in a position to practise bhakti-yoga, prapatti or the surrendering of oneself to God is prescribed as an alternative and simple means. The ocean of transmigration is hard to cross. When one feels completely helpless, one may renounce all and seek refuge in God who is all-powerful and all-merciful, and who will surely liberate oneself from all sins, as the *Gitācārya* himself declares. This is open to all, irrespective of the differences of cast, creed, colour, sex, position etc. If an individual crosses the ocean of bondage by adopting this means, he attains the state of bliss which enables the self to have the beatific vision of, and communion with, the Deity. There is no return afterwards to the mundane existence, as categorically declared in the last aphorism of Vedānta. This is the supreme end or *summum bonum* of all the human endeavour (*parama puruṣārtha*).

These are the essential teachings which Rāmānuja developed on the basis of the *upaniṣads*, *smṛtis*, *purāṇas*, *itihāsas* and well-established tradition.

Dr Bharadwaj has clearly brought out the above teachings of Rāmānuja in this book in an easy and flowing style. He has really rendered a great service, in publishing this book, to the Vaiṣṇava

community. It is hoped that this will prove a valuable contribution to the study of Indian Philosophy in general and to the study of Visiṣṭādvaita system of Philosophy in particular, to the scholars, students as well as to the general reader.



New Delhi
30th Sept., 1958

Speaker, Loka-sabha

PREFACE

India has cradled several systems of Philosophy—both of Vedic and non-Vedic origin. Among the well-known six systems of the former, those of Yoga and Vedānta have explicitly stated devotion to God as a means to attaining perfection. The conception of God in Vedānta is decidedly fuller and clearer than that in the system of Yoga. The credit goes to South India to have produced five prominent interpreters of Vedānta: Saṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Nimbārka and Vallabha. Rāmānuja's was the first attempt to give us a scholarly exposition of Vedānta from a purely theistic view-point. He was among those thinkers whose works deserve deep study. Much has been written on Rāmānuja by scholars, yet much remains to be written. The present work is the result of my attempt to study his thought from devotional point of view.

The Philosophy of Rāmānuja is a Philosophy of devotion to God. 'God' is a very sweet word, and the very mention thereof inspires adoration. The Vedas proclaim that He is Father of all (savitā). The Brahman of the upaniṣads and the Brahma-sūtra, and the Bhagavān of the Bhāgavata is also the Creator. The Gītā repeats, and Rāmānuja re-iterates, the same. Fatherhood of God implies fraternity of humanity resulting in love and regard everywhere in the creation on the one hand, and in deep devotion to the Creator on the other.

To each chapter, and in some cases to each section thereof, references have been appended. They are mostly from Sanskrit works, and for the sake of convenience, I have preferred to give them in Devanāgari script. For clarity's sake the references, along with their sources, are cited mostly in full. With a view to facilitating the pronunciation of Sanskrit words occurring in this work, I have used diacritical marks a list of which I am giving in the beginning of the book.

The present work was my thesis under the title 'The Bhakti School of Rāmānuja' which I submitted, in 1951, to the University of Delhi; and I am very grateful to Dr. N.V. Banerji, M.A., Ph.D. (London), Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, who, in spite of his multifarious activities in and

outside the University, supervised my work. I was immensely benefitted by his able guidance.

I am indebted as well to my elder brother, Dr R. Bharadwaj, M.A., Ph.D., who kindly revised my work and also gave other valuable suggestions.

I am thankful to Shri K. D. Sharma, B.A., D.L.Sc., Librarian Gr. I of the Central Secretariat, who has prepared the Index for this book.

I must also evince gratitude to Sir Shankar Lall Charitable Trust Society, New Delhi, for kindly undertaking the publication of this book. But for their generosity, the work would not have seen the light.

Modern School, New Delhi

Dipāvali, 2015 Vikrama-Saṁvat

K. D. BHARADWAJ

DIACRITICAL MARKS

a	अ	as in	Bharata	भरत
a	आ		Rādhā	राधा
i	इ		Vaiśeṣika	वैशेषिक
ī	ई		Lakṣmī	लक्ष्मी
u	उ		Upendra	उपेन्द्र
ū	ऊ		Sutra	सूत्र
r	ऋ		Kṛṣṇa	कृष्ण
e	ए		Aitareya	ऐतरेय
ai	ऐ		Taittirīya	तैत्तिरीय
o	ओ		Kaṭhopaniṣad	कठोपनिषद्
au	औ		Aupamanyava	ओपमन्यव
k	क्		Kauśitaki	कौशितकी
kh	ख्		Akhila	अखिल
g	ग्		Gitā	गीता
gh	ঘ্		Śatruघna	শত্রুঘন
ñ	ঙ্		Gaṅgā	গংগা
c	চ্		Pāṭicarātra	পাঠচরাত্র
ch	ছ্		Chāndogya	ছান্দোগ্য
j	জ্		Rāmānuja	রামানুজ
jh	ঝ্		Nirjhara	নিঝর
ñ	ঙ্		Patañjali	পতঞ্জলি
t	ট্		Aṭavi	অটবী
ṭh	ঠ্		Kaṭha Upaniṣad	কঠ উপনিষদ্
d	ঢ্		Māṇḍukya	মাণ্ডুক্য
ḍh	ঢ্		Dhūmṛdhī	ধুংঢি
ঘ	ঘ্		Nārāyaṇa	নারাযণ
t	ত্		Sutra	সূত্র
th	ঘ্		Vedārthasaṅgraha	বেদার্থসংগ্রহ
d	ঢ্		Śrīraṅgagadaya	শ্রীরংগগদ্য
dh	ঢ্		Āṭaḍbana	আটাধন
n	ন্		Rāmānanda	রামানন্দ

p	प्	as in	Purāṇa	पुराण
ph	फ्		Saphala	सफल
b	ब्		Nimbärka	निम्बाक
bh	भ्		Bhāgavata	भागवत
m	म्		Mahābhārata	महाभारत
y	य्		Rāmāyaṇa	रामायण
r	र्		Rāma	राम
l	ल्		Lakṣmaṇa	लक्ष्मण
v	व्		Veda	वेद
ś	श्		Śri	श्री
ṣ	ष्		Viṣṇu	विष्णु
s	स्		Sāttvata	सात्त्वत
h	ह्		Bṛhadāraṇyaka	बृहदारण्यक
ḥ	ः		Śuciḥ	शुचिः
m̐	·		Saṁhitā	संहिता

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श्रीगणेशाय नमः

सन्दर्भं प्र-णेतुः सविवरणं मंगलमाचरणं पृष्ठेन—

पिपर्ति प्रकृति नित्यं पुमांसं च पृणाति यः ।
यः पारयति भक्तानामशेषा एव कामनाः ॥१॥
विश्वं व्याप्त्यापि यो देव एतस्मात् परतः स्थितः ।
परस्मै श्रीमते तस्मै विष्णवेऽन्तु नमो नमः ॥२॥

यः प्रकृति त्रिगुणात्मकामवेतनां नित्यं पिपर्ति तदन्तरात्मतयाऽवस्थानेन पूरयति, पृष्ठानपूरणयोर्ज्ञहोत्यादिः, पुमांसं च चेतनं पुरुषमपि पृणाति तदन्तर्यामितया विराजमानः पालयति, पृष्ठानपूरणयोः कथादिः, एवं च यो भक्तानां तदेकपरायणानामक्षेषा एव कामनाऽच्चतुवर्गान्तर्वर्त्तनीरभिलाप्याः पारयति पूरयति सफलयतोत्तियावत्, पृष्ठानेचुरादिः । विश्वं प्रपञ्चं व्याप्त्यापि यो देव एतस्मात् परतः स्थितिस्तस्मै परस्मै निरतिशयोत्कर्षयते श्रीमते लक्ष्मी-रङ्गिजत-वामभागाय विष्णुवे नमोनमः ।

प्रारिप्सित-प्रकरण-निध्यत्यूह-परिसमाप्तये मंगलमाचरणः सन्दर्भ-निबद्धारो विविक्षितमपि मंगलमूल्येनैव संक्षिप्तन्तोति केवाचन विद्वांस समयः । तमेव समयं विमृश्येहाऽपि सन्दर्भसारो निवेशितः । स चैवमाविवकरणीयः ॥

प्रकृतिपुरुषात्मकजगतः पूरणेन भगवतोऽलिलजगतोन्तरात्मतो प्रकटीकृता, तथा पालनेनानिरुद्धरूपता द्योतिता, अनिरुद्दिश्चाऽन्त्र द्यूहानां प्रतीकद्वेन मन्त्रध्यः । भक्तजनाभिलिपितपूरणेन च तस्य कल्याण-गुण-गणाऽकरता सूचिता । कल्याणगुणेकदेश-घर्म-संस्थापनहेतुकोऽवतारवादोऽप्यत्र ऊहनीयः । भक्तपदे बहुवचन-प्रयोगो जीवानां पारमार्थिकीमनेकतां द्योतयति । विश्वपदेन भगवत एकपाद-विभूतिः समर्थिता, तस्माच्च परतः स्थितिस्तस्य त्रिपाद-विभूतिसद्भावं व्यनक्तिः । परशब्दः परमात्मन उपास्यत्वेनोत्कृष्टतमतां निर्दिशति । भगवतः श्रीमत्वं त्रिविग्नजनन्या लक्ष्मीदेव्या विष्णोरन्यायितां साधयति । श्रीविष्णुद्वचायं स एव यः परमकमनीयाकारो वनमालिपीतः चर-प्रभूति-विविष-विशेषण-विभूषितो विश्वतो विश्वतः । चरमद्वचात्र नमोवाकः श्रीमःनारायण-चरण-नलिन-युग्मल-वन्दनाऽपर-पर्याय-भूतो भवते: प्रतीकरतस्या एव चेतनजीवने परमोपादेयतां प्रतिपादयति ।

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

I

Rāmānuja's Biography

Born in 1017 at Sriperumbudur, the ancient Bhūtapurī—Sanctity of the place—Parentage—Early education—Marriage—Further education with Yādava Prakāśa—The teacher feels jealous of the student's genius—Intrigue—Yāmuna at death-bed—Three promises—Initiation from Pūrnācārya—Domestic clash—Asceticism—Apostle of Śrīraṅgam—Reputation—Tour to Kāśmīra—Literary activities—Debates and discussions—Residence in Śaligrāma in Mysore for 12 years—Tour to Delhi—Return to Śrīraṅgam—Full span of life.

Ācārya Rāmānuja, a prince among the devotees, was born in 1017, in Sriperumbudur, a village in Chingleput district which is about thirty-six miles to the south of the city of Madras. The Skandapurāṇa has recorded a story regarding the sanctity of the place under the name of Bhutapuri.¹ Some of the angels in the service of Śiva celebrated, in ancient times, a festival in honour of Viṣṇu; and they built up a city to accommodate the gods invited on the occasion. Since the Bhūtas (Śiva's angels) constructed the city, it was called Bhūtapuri, the modern Sriperumbudur.

Once upon a time, King Harita, son of Yuvanāśva, propitiated the Supreme Deity, Viṣṇu, in Bhutapuri to atone for a sin. The Deity was pleased to appear before the monarch not only to expiate him from the sin but also to confer upon him the status of a Brāhmaṇa.² Harita then settled there, reconstructed and rehabilitated the city which was then lying dilapidated; and his descendants were called the Brāhmaṇas of the Hārita gotra. Keśava Yajñika, Rāmānuja's father, belonged to the Hārita gotra and was a follower of the Apastamba school of the Yajurveda. Once on the occasion of a lunar eclipse he repaired to the place where the river Kāveri meets the sea, and in the presence of an idol called Pārtha-sārathi (the charioteer of Arjuna) performed, along with his spouse Kāntimati, a sacrifice with a desire to beget a son. By divine grace the couple were blessed with a son on Thursday, the 5th of the

bright fortnight in Caitra in the Śaka era 939 corresponding to Vikrama era 1074 and 1017 A.D. The astrologers predicted that the child would one day become a unique person. The child's maternal uncle, Śailapūrṇa, gave the new-born child the name of Rāmānuja.

He was invested with the sacred thread at the age of eight and he studied the scriptures from his father till the age of 16 when he was married. Subsequently he lost his father and left home with his family for Kāñci,³ with a view to acquiring more knowledge. Pāñdita Yādava Prakāśa was a famous teacher of that time, and Rāmānuja began to receive his lessons from him.

The king of Kāñci one day invited Yādava Prakāśa to his palace and requested him to expel an evil spirit from the princess. Yādava tried his sacred formulae, but when they proved futile, Rāmānuja touched the princess' forehead with his feet, and as a result the evil spirit departed. This miraculous feat procured Rāmānuja presents from the royal treasury, which caused jealousy in the teacher's heart. The latter's jealousy reached its culmination when Rāmānuja, after having listened to his teacher's interpretation of the famous philosophical proposition 'Truth, knowledge and infinite is the Brahman'⁴, offered his own explanation from the viewpoint of qualified monism. Rāmānuja quietly bore the reproaches coming from his teacher as a result of his suggesting a novel explanation, but the relation was estranged, and the teacher and the taught remained aloof.

Having intrigued with his pupils to drown Rāmānuja at the sacred confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā at Prayāga, Yādava sent for Rāmānuja and persuaded him to accompany the students bound for a religious trip. While the party was passing through a forest, one of the students, Govinda by name and a cousin of Rāmānuja, who happened to know the secret, divulged the same to Rāmānuja who at once slipped away and got astray in the wilderness. The missing person was searched for far and near, and when he was not available anywhere, the teacher and leader of the party terminated the journey, thinking that Rāmānuja had fallen a victim to some wild beast. Rāmānuja, of course, saved his life, but lost his way. He was unsafe in the forest, but God is gracious and always comes to the rescue of those who depend on Him. The Deity appeared in the form of a fowler-couple and escorted Rāmānuja safely to Kāñci.

On reaching home, Rāmānuja related, at his mother's advice, to Kāñcipūrṇa, a local saint, all that had taken place ; and the saint

explained the incident to be an auspicious one signifying Divine mercy.

Yadava Prakāśa felt very much ashamed when he came to know about Rāmānuja's safe return. He again feigned to be on good terms with Rāmānuja, and the latter resumed his studies with him.

Kañcīpūrṇa's teacher, Yāmūnācārya, was a great scholar and lived at Śrīraṅgam. He was in search of a young man who could propagate the cult of devotion to Viṣṇu. He had come to know of Rāmānuja's ability through his own pupil, and when he paid a visit to Kañcī, his pupil, Kañcīpūrṇa, told him about Rāmānuja in details. On that occasion, Yāmuna could see Rāmānuja at a distance, but did not consider it proper to talk to him as he was at that time in the company of Yadava Prakāśa's students. He, however, gave Rāmānuja his blessings and returned to Śrīraṅgam.

One day when Yadava was imparting lessons on Vedānta to his disciples, Rāmānuja was engaged massaging the teacher. In order to explain the Upaniṣadic text 'Tasya kāpyāsam yathā puṇḍarikam evam akṣinī', the teacher likened the Deity's eyes to the red buttocks of a monkey. This wounded Rāmānuja's heart and he began to shed tears which fell on the teacher. Thereupon the teacher expressed his surprise and interrogated Rāmānuja as to what made him weep. Asked by the teacher to explain the text otherwise, Rāmānuja compared, in his interpretation, the eyes of the Deity to the petals of a lotus opening under the sun's rays.⁵ The difference in the elucidation of the text hurt the teacher so much that he not only gave vent to an unusual wrath, but also turned Rāmānuja out of his seminary. Rāmānuja came out, and began to utilize his leisure in devotion.

Now Yāmuna wanted to have Rāmānuja to work for the cause of devotional philosophy and, with this aim in view, he sent out Pūrṇācārya, one of his pupils, to bring Rāmānuja to Śrīraṅgam. Rāmānuja gladly accepted the invitation and accompanied the escort, but while both were on the way to Śrīraṅgam, they got the news of Yāmūnācārya's demise. When they reached the destination, Yāmuna was lying on death-bed, with three fingers of his right hand closed. Being informed that Yāmuna had three unfulfilled desires, Rāmānuja promised in the presence of all the people assembled there that he would try his best to propagate devotion to the Deity. At this one of the fingers of the deceased saint stretched out. Rāmānuja then promised that he would write a commentary on the Brahmasutra from the devotional viewpoint. The result was that the second finger of the dead body became

straight. Rāmānuja then assured the audience that he would see to it that a person named Parāśara discharges the obligation to Parāśara, the father of Vyāsa, who composed the best of the Purāṇas viz. the Viṣṇu-purāṇa; and this time the result was that the third finger also unfolded itself. Some say that the three desires cherished by Yāmuna were (a) to get a commentary written on the Brahmasūtra, (b) giving the name of Parāśara to a suitable person, and (c) giving the name of Śaṅkakopa to another.⁶ Rāmānuja then returned to Kāñcī, and informed Kāñcīpūrṇa of Yāmuna's demise.

After some time Rāmānuja went, under the direction of the priest of the temple, to Śrīraṅgam with a view to receiving initiation to Vaiṣṇavism. While he was en route, he met near Madura, Purṇācārya whom the Vaiṣṇava community of Śrīraṅgam had deputed to bring Rāmānuja in order that he could succeed Yāmūnācārya as their leader. The succession of teachers is Nāthamūni, Pūṇḍarikākṣa, Rāmamīśra, Yāmūnācārya and Rāmānuja.⁷ Rāmānuja got his initiation from Purṇācārya in the temple of Śrī Rāma at that place; and then both came to Kāñcī where Rāmānuja learnt from his preceptor the mysteries of the sect. Both the preceptor and the disciple began to live together. For some time the two families lived together peacefully, but afterwards there was a clash between the ladies in the household, and as a result the preceptor left the place for Śrīraṅgam. Rāmānuja was grieved at the incident, and as he had no mundane desire but had only one more mission to fulfil, he sent his wife to her father, and himself went to Bhūtāpuri where he embraced asceticism and afterwards returned to Kāñcī. Kāñcīpūrṇa was very glad to see Rāmānuja in his new robes, and from that time onward Rāmānuja became known as Yatirāja or the king of the ascetics.

Dāśarathi and Kureśa, his sister's sons, were the first to become his disciples. Rāmānuja's former teacher, Yādava Prakāśa, was very much impressed by his deep learning and sincerity, and became his pupil under the name of Govinda-dāsa, and afterwards composed Yati-dharma-saṁuccaya.

Accompanied by his disciples, Rāmānuja then visited Śrīraṅgam where Purṇācārya was glad to receive him and to offer the post of the superintending apostle of the temple of Śrīraṅgam. Rāmānuja humbly accepted the offer, and remained there for some time, dedicating himself to the worship of the Deity. Advised by Purṇācārya, he learnt from Goṣṭhipūrṇa the significance of the mystic formula, and taught it to seventy-four Brāhmaṇa devotees.

One day a jealous householder offered poisonous food to Rāmānuja as midday alms, but the wife of the man while presenting the food felt sorry and fell at the ascetic's feet. Rāmānuja was quick to suspect poison in the food offered to him and did not eat it.

Reputed for his vast erudition as Rāmānuja was, he, in order to establish his own faith, decided to refute the doctrines which were opposed to his own. Once he had to spend seventeen days in overcoming an adversary, Yajñamurti by name.

During his residence in Tirupati for a year he received esoteric instructions on the Rāmāyaṇa from his maternal uncle. He then started on a trip with a view to propagating the cult of devotion. He visited many places, founded several religio-philosophical centres to be run by his own pupils, and initiated deserving persons to his creed.*

Rāmānuja knew that Bodhāyana had written a commentary on the Brahmasutra from the point of devotion, and that the work was available in Kaśmira. He therefore went to that place with his disciple Kureśa. The latter had a very powerful memory and easily learnt the commentary by heart. As the scholars of Kaśmira were reluctant to part with the original book to be taken home by the guest even for a short time, Rāmānuja returned to his headquarters and made use of Kureśa's memory while writing his own commentary on the Brahmasutra. His short commentary on the sutras is called the Vedānta-sūra and the longer one is known as the Vedānta-dīpa. But more important than either is the Ācārya's interpretation of the aphorisms, known as the Śri-bhāṣya, his masterpiece. Apart from these commentaries, he wrote a gloss on the Gītā and wrote an independent work, the Vedārthasaṅgraha. His Gadya-traya is replete with devotion, and is an independent work in prose divided into three parts respectively entitled Śrīranga, Vaikuṇṭha and Śaranāgati.

Having finished his literary activities in connection with the cult of devotion to the Deity, Rāmānuja set out with his pupils and disciples to hold debates and discussions. He opposed and refuted the views of his opponents so successfully that they eventually accepted his views. He visited many important places, and it was in Kaśmira that the title of Bhāṣyakāra was conferred upon him. On his way back from Kaśmira he stayed at Tirupati and identified the

* "It is believed by some people that Rāmānuja admitted among the Brāhmaṇas a large number of people of other castes. He never did any such thing."

Sir Subrahmanya Ayyar Lectures on the History of Śri Vaiṣṇavas delivered by T. A. Gopinath Rao—Madras—1923, page 43.

idol of the Deity to be that of Viṣṇu and not of Śiva and thereby set at rest a long-standing dispute.

Kureśa was the best disciple of the Ācārya; and it was under his direction that one of the former's sons was given the name of Parāśara. It was Parāśara who, later on, wrote a commentary on the Śrī Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma. Rāmānuja gave his own cousin, Pillan, the name of Śāthakopa and assigned to him the task of writing a commentary on the *Tiruvoymoli*.

Put to trouble by Krimikanṭha (Kulottunga I. C. 1070–1118 A.D.) of the Cola dynasty, Rāmānuja had to quit Śriraṅgam under disguise. He had to suffer a great deal on account of this shifting, and on one occasion he had to go without food for several days. He settled down, and spent a long period of twelve years, in Śaligrāma in the kingdom of Bīṭṭideva, a Jain king of Hoysala dominion in Mysore. The king was very much influenced by the Ācārya's piety, and accepted him as his preceptor. Having founded a temple at Melkote, he came to Delhi with a view to procuring an image of Viṣṇu which was in the possession of the then emperor. The Muslim princess used it as a toy—a playmate.⁸ Rāmānuja was very happy to have the image which is said to have approached him of its own accord. The Ācārya called it by the name of Sampat-Kumāra. The image was afterwards installed in the temple at Melkote.

Vikrama Cola, the new king, unlike his father, had a sympathetic attitude towards Rāmānuja. This induced the latter to return to Śriraṅgam. There he installed the images of the Ālvārs.⁹

Rāmānuja lived a full life of one hundred and twenty years, and his devotion to the Deity did never wane. Immediately before his death he spent several days in imparting religious discourses to the disciples and predicted the day of his departure from this world. All who came to know of it were very sad. With a view to leaving behind something that might console his followers, he got two images of himself made and presented them to his disciples.

A day previous to his death, he appointed Parāśara Bhaṭṭa, Kureśa's son, as the priest in charge of Śriraṅgam's temple; and on the final day, he first worshipped the Deity as usual, and then asked the worshippers of Śriraṅgam to pardon all his shortcomings and advised them to continue the worship with the same zeal as before. Then requesting the audience not to grieve but to bid a happy farewell, he lay down with his head on Govinda's lap and his feet on the lap of Andhrapūrṇa, one of the most prominent among his seventy-four

disciples. Amid the recitals of religious hymns and chanting of the Divine names, Rāmānuja's soul travelled to the other world. The Acārya breathed his last at midday on Saturday, the 10th of the white fortnight of the month of Māgha. Thus, as a saint did he both live and die.¹⁰

References

1. (अ) यत् भूतपुरं नाम नगरं पापनाशनम् ।
तस्य दर्शनमात्रेण नरः पापेः प्रमुच्यते । (स्कन्दपुराणान्तर्गतं भूतपुरी-माहात्म्यम् १. २३)
(आ) अथ ते प्रीतमनसः सर्वे भूतगणा ह्रैः ।
उत्सवं कतुंमीशस्य पुरीं चक्रमनोहराम् ॥
यस्माद् भूतर्त्रियं सूच्टा पुरी पृष्ठविविद्विनी ।
तस्माद् भूतपुरी नामा कीर्त्यते भूवनोदरे ॥
(स्कन्दपुराणान्तर्गतं भूतपुरीमाहात्म्यम् २. ५६-६६)
2. तेन प्रीतोहमधुना ददिम ब्राह्मण्यमुत्तमम् ।
अनेनैव शरीरेण ब्राह्मणस्त्वं भविष्यति ॥
(स्कन्दपुराणान्तर्गतं भूतपुरी-माहात्म्यम् ३. १०३)
3. The Ancient city of Conjeeveram lies forty miles southwest of Madras, known to history and to the people generally, as Kanchipuram. It was long the famous capital of the Pallavas. (Seven Pagodas, Chingleput and Conjeeveram : Page 28).
4. सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म (तीतरीयोगनिषद् २.१)
5. गम्भीराम्भसि जातस्य ग्रोद्यद्भानुकरेस्तदा ।
सम्फुल्लदलपद्यस्य सदृशो लोचने ह्रैः (प्रपन्नामृतम् ८. १४)
(तुलनात्मक-वाक्यम्) — गम्भीराम्भः-समुद्भूत-सुमृष्टनाल-रविकरविकसित-पुण्डरीक-दलामलायतेक्षणः (वेदाधंसग्रहः पृष्ठम् २४५)
6. Ancient India by Aiyangar : Page 198.
7. An Outline of the Religious Literature of India by Farquahar : Page 241.
8. 'The story is that the Muslim Princess had this image for her playmate and really loved Krishna' The Cultural Heritage of India, (Vol. II, Page 91, footnote).
9. History of India by R. S. Tripathi, page 480.
10. The biography is mainly based on Prapannāmṛta.

II

Rāmānuja as a Religious Teacher

Offer of a soothing outlook on life—Reality of finite souls and the external world—His influence on Hinduism—Caitanya initiated to Vaisnavism by the eighth successor of Rāmānuja.

The influence which was once wielded by Buddhism, subsequently came to belong to the Advaita Vedānta as preached by Saṅkara. According to Advaita Vedānta, Ultimate Reality is one or rather non-dual, absolute and attributeless.¹ In other words, the Absolute is the substratum of all objects of our experience ; it appears as God (Iśvara) in its association with cosmic ignorance.² So both God and the universe are only empirically real, but ultimately of an illusory character. The mundane career of the individual self (Jivātman) comes to an end only on its attainment of the knowledge of the identity of itself with the One Reality, which means the absorption of the finite into the Absolute.

The view of the empirical world as illusory became widely current in India in the post-Śaṅkara period, and the Advaita school of Vedānta lay more and more stress on the futility of the view of the world as real. In consequence, intellectual discussions took the place of true devotion to the Supreme. The man of intellect could indeed satisfy himself by considering the pros and cons of the Advaitic view, but the man of heart found no solace in it, as he wanted a firm support for his religious faith which the Advaita doctrine of the attributeless Absolute could not provide. There was no room for love and mercy in the conception of Ultimate Reality. Man is naturally inclined to approach the *One* who responds to earnest prayers. A devotee does not find in Nirguṇa Brahman of Śaṅkara any warmth of compassion that can cheer him up in despair and distress. But the God with empirical status which Śaṅkara assigns to Him cannot satisfy the need, as He is not the highest. The love of a devotee yearns for an object which is inferior to none. The Brahman in its empirical aspect cannot arouse a sense of devotion in the heart of the true devotee. The culmination of the feeling of

an affectionate heart is everlasting fellowship with the beloved or the thrilling enjoyment experienced in the most sacred proximity with the beloved Deity, which is foreign to non-dualistic experience.

Man cannot also find any pleasure in the affairs of the world whose existence is not more real than a myth. So the soul hankering after happiness and bliss cannot find them either here or hereafter. Even things of the highest authority, e.g. the scriptures and the preceptor, must be false in a false world.³ Morality, religion and rituals must be wedded to falsehood, so that nothing would be left to allay the fear of the turmoil of the world. Even the individual must know himself to be illusory and is left with no way of escape from the universal illusion except his absorption into the attributeless Brahman which is, to all human intents and purposes, no better than the Void or Śūnyam of the Buddhists.

However logical Śaṅkara's philosophy was, it was dry and did not afford any consolation to humanity. While people were subjected to the ravages of a dry intellectualism, Rāmānuja came forward with the offer of a soothing outlook on the universe. It appealed not only to the heart but gave nourishment to the head also. He had his own way of interpreting the texts of the scriptures. Although he elucidated the sacred books in a way different from that of Śaṅkara, he based his own on the ancient tradition. There was a vast literature—religious and philosophical—before him, and he chalked out a line of thought which ultimately came to be known as Visiṣṭādvaita. He refuted the Advaita doctrine of Ignorance,* arguing that it (Ignorance) is incompatible with an omniscient Being.⁴ For the Absolute which is limited by Ignorance is no Absolute in the strict sense of the term. The difficulty cannot be removed by attributing the Ignorance to the finite soul, as finitude itself is due to Ignorance. To hold that Ignorance is neither existent nor non-existent is obviously unreasonable, and still more unreasonable is the view that Ignorance of an indescribable nature is something positive. If it is positive, there is no hope for man's liberation from it.⁵

Rāmānuja admitted the reality not only of the individual selves but also of the external world. For him, the world was not unreal as it is a place for God's sport (*līlā*). As God is real, so is His *līlā*, and also the world which is the material setting of His *līlā*. In other words, the world being a plane for the Divine sport cannot be a mere illusion. The Deity is supreme and the inexhaustible substratum of

*In the Sanskrit expression 'avidyā' the verbal root, according to Vasiṣṭha, is *vid* = to be. The word thus means 'that which exists not.' According to others, it is *vid* = to know; and the expression would therefore mean absence of knowledge or wrong knowledge.

auspicious attributes. He is an object of our adoration. He is neither empirical, nor a mere void, but is such as can be apprehended not only on the eternal plane but on the empirical plane also.⁶ It is He who has created all that is, and enlivens all that He has created, just as an individual soul enlivens its body. The whole universe is His body, hence He is all. This gives an altogether new orientation to a thinker who conceives the Reality as qualified. While constituting the body of the Deity, the finite selves and physical things do not cease to maintain their individuality and reality. Although they are subservient to the Almighty, yet they have their own independent being. Rāmānuja further holds that the finite selves do not lose their individuality even in emancipation. If they lost it, they would not enjoy the fellowship of the Deity. Every individual is striving for bliss, and the strife has its culmination in the beatific vision of, and communion with, the Deity who is infinite Bliss, conscious of His own existence.

Rāmānuja held that the way leading to that vision and fellowship is devotion which is open to all, irrespective of the differences of caste, sex, position in society etc. All beings are His; hence He is accessible to all.⁷ As soon as we surrender our all to Him, He embraces us and admits us to His eternal play (*lila*), but we do not thereby lose our individuality but only get a glimpse or a direct experience of His blissful presence.⁸

All over India, most of the Hindu forms of devotion and worship have been influenced by Rāmānuja's philosophy. 'His chief aim, the reconciliation of the doctrines of the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the *Mahābhārata*, and the *Purāṇas*, with his own religion and philosophy, was theological rather than philosophical.'⁹ The *ācāryas* coming after him—Maddhva and Nimbarka, Vallabha and Caitanya—all followed his footsteps in refuting the doctrine of *māyā* as advanced by Śaṅkara, maintained individuality of the finite self, conceived the Deity as Ultimate Reality, and regarded the devotion to Him as the highest of all human activities.

Rāmānanda, a follower of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, introduced some minor changes into the old faith and started a new one to which he initiated twelve disciples. One of them was Kabira whose poetry is well known for its mysticism which attracted even the modern poet Tagore. Mirā whose songs have been universally appreciated in this country is said to be a disciple of Raidūsa who himself was a disciple of Rāmānanda. Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu is usually regarded as a follower of the Maddhva cult,¹⁰ but according to

Govind-dasa, Keśava Bhāratī, eighth in succession of Rāmānuja, initiated him and gave him the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya by which he is universally known.¹¹

All this shows the popularity of Rāmānuja's philosophical and theological views and their hold on the Hindu mind for centuries.

References

1. न तु ब्रह्म जातिमदतो न सदादिशब्दवाच्यम् नापि गुणवद् येन गुणशब्देनोच्येत् निरुंगत्वात् ॥ (गीतायाम् शांकर-भाष्यम् १३.१२)
2. इदमज्ञानम् समष्टिः-व्यष्टिःभिप्रायेणीकमनेकमिति च व्यवहित्यते ।*** इयं समष्टिःस्तकृष्टोपाधितया विशुद्ध-स्त्व-प्रधाना ।
एतदुपहितं चेतन्यम्**** ईश्वर इति च व्यपदिश्यते ।
(सदानन्दकृत वेदान्तसारः)
3. (अ) आचार्यो ज्ञानोपदेष्टा मिथ्या, शास्त्रजन्यं ज्ञानं च मिथ्या,
एतत् सर्वं मिथ्याभूतेनैव शास्त्रेणावगम्यते इति वर्णयन्ति ।
(वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् १३)
- (ब) तस्मादविद्यावद्विषयाण्येव प्रत्यक्षादीनि प्रमाणानि शास्त्राणि च (ब्रह्म-
सूत्रे शांकर-भाष्योपोद्धारातः)
4. अपि च निर्विशेष-ज्ञानमात्रं ब्रह्म तच्चाच्छादिकाऽविद्यातिरोहित-स्वस्वरूपं
स्वगतनानात्मवं पश्यतीत्ययमर्थो न घटते । (वेदार्थः संग्रहः पृष्ठम् ६५)
5. ब्रह्म-व्यतिरेकेनैतदभ्युपगमे पुनरविद्या न निवृत्ता स्यात् ।
(वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् ८०)
6. अत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुत इति चोपासनवेलायां यो ब्रह्मानुभवस्तद्विषयमित्यर्थः
(श्रीभाष्यम् ४. २. ८)
7. (अ) देवतिर्थ-मनुष्यस्यावरात्मना स्थितेषु जातितद्वाकारतः स्वभावतो ज्ञान-
तदश्वात्यन्तोत्कृष्टापकृष्टरूपेण वतंमानेषु सर्वेषु भूतेषु समाधयणीयत्वाय समोहम्
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ६. २६)
(ब) स ह्याश्रमः सदोपास्यः समस्तैरेकं एव च ।
इति सर्वेरात्मयाधात्म्यवेदिभिः सेव्यः पुरुषोत्तमः
(वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् २६५)
8. न चोच्छिन्न-कर्म-बन्धस्यासंकुचित-ज्ञानरयं परब्रह्मकानुभव-स्वभावस्य तदेक-
प्रियस्यानवधिकातिशयानन्दं ब्रह्मानुभवतोःयापेक्षा ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् ४.४.२२)

9. India's Past by A.A. Macdonell : Oxford 1927, page 149.

10. भगवान् कृष्णचेतन्यः सम्प्रदायरक्षणार्थं माध्वसम्प्रदायाद् दीक्षितो अभूत् । अत एते माध्वमतावलंबिन इत्यभिधीयन्ते । (प्रमेय रत्नावली, पृष्ठम् १३)

11. On the third day of his sojourn at Cutwa, Chaitanya asked his companions to make preparations for his initiation as a mendicant. The most imposing part of the ceremony of initiation is the shaving of the crown lock. From the description of Govinda it appears that Chaitanya's hair instead of consisting of a small lock, covered his whole head. Deva, the barber of Cutwa, shaved him, and Keshab Bharati, eighth in the succession of disciples from Ramanuja, the great founder of the Sri Sect of Vaishnabas, initiated him and gave him Sri Krishna Chatianya as his monastic name—a name by which he has become famous. As a householder his name was Bishwambhar. His mother used to call him Nimai.

—The Diary of Govinda Das published in the Calcutta Review No. 211, January 1898, Page 86-87.

III

The Sources of Rāmānuja's Devotional Philosophy :

Mantra—Brāhmaṇa—The Upanisads—The Rāmāyaṇa—The Mahābhārata—The Purāṇas—The Pāñcarātra—The writings of Ālvars—The works of Ālavandāra.

The Mantra portion of the Vedas.

The Vaiṣṇava cult as propounded by Rāmānuja and other Vaiṣṇava apostles, had its origin in the Rgveda. The sages of the hoary past used to sing beautiful songs in praise of their deities. The hymns in eulogy of Viṣṇu composed by Medhātithi Kāṇva, Dirghatamā Aucathya and Vaśiṣṭha Maitrāvaraṇi are simply charming. Viṣṇu means the pervasive. The Deity who pervades the whole universe is Viṣṇu. Medhātithi versified, in gāyatri metre, the three strides of Viṣṇu, the invincible,¹ and said that those who have true knowledge, see the Divine abode of Viṣṇu. According to Dirghatamā, Viṣṇu has created the worlds and has alone supported the whole universe.² Praised on account of His valorous deeds, He is friendly ; and His abode where His devotees live in eternal bliss is said to be extremely resplendent and a source of refinement and grace. He is lord, saviour, non-injurious and fulfiller of desires. The devotees supplicate for His good will. According to Vaśiṣṭha, Viṣṇu knows all about the creation and none has reached the end of His greatness.³ He is entreated for the bestowal of his good thought with a view to the grant of plenty of horses and riches. His name is resplendent *i.e.*, familiar to all ; His devotees are firm *i.e.*, unflinching and He resides beyond the region (of Prakṛti).

The ninetieth hymn of the tenth book of the Rgveda is the well-known sixteen-stanza hymn of Man where Viṣṇu is given the name of Puruṣa, and where the world is said to be His creation.

In the Yajurveda there are many stanzas relating to Viṣṇu which specially mention the offering of oblations to Him. In one passage He is invoked to fill His hands—both right and left—with wealth either from heaven or from earth or from the middle region

and to bestow it upon the devotees.⁴ The thirtyfirst chapter, the Puruṣa-sūkta, consists of 22 stanzas of which the first sixteen are almost the same as they are in the R̄gveda. That the hymn of Man is in praise of Viṣṇu is corroborated by the fact that its last stanza mentions Śrī and Lakṣmi as Viṣṇu's consorts.⁵

The Sāmaveda also devotes to Viṣṇu several stanzas along with a few from the hymn of Man; and similar is the case with the Atharva-veda where the entire hymn of Man covering sixteen stanzas is reiterated with little variation.

The Brāhmaṇa.

It is thus clear that the beginning of the cult of Viṣṇu is already there during the mantra period. Coming down to the Brāhmaṇa period, we find that Viṣṇu enjoyed the foremost position in the Hindu pantheon of the age, as is clear from a passage of the Aitareya;⁶ and it is in the Black Yajurveda that the word 'Nārāyaṇa', so popular in the later Vaiṣṇava literature, occurs for the first time.⁷

The Upaniṣads.

The Kaṭha Upaniṣad mentions Viṣṇu's abode as the highest destination of the wandering soul;⁸ and the Vaiṣṇava commentators are perhaps right in holding that the Brahman of the Upaniṣadic literature is another name for Viṣṇu.

According to the Nārāyaṇopaniṣad, Viṣṇu resides in the heart of every individual, and there He looks like a blue cloud encircled by lightning. The Subalopaniṣad says that He is the inner soul of all.⁹ There are likewise other Vaiṣṇava Upaniṣads which proclaim Viṣṇu's supremacy.

The Rāmāyaṇa.

The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki depicts the noble deeds of Rāma who is another form of Viṣṇu.¹⁰ In fact, the epic helped very much the cause of the cult of devotion, and is considered to be an authoritative work on Vaiṣṇavism. It contains twentyfour thousand stanzas and it is said that the opening verse of each thousand begins with one of the 24 letters, in serial order, of the gāyatrī mantra, which gives the book an additional sanctity and a Vedic basis.

The Mahābhārata.

In a still greater measure did the cult of Viṣṇu find support in the greater epic, the Mahābhārata, which is indeed an encyclopaedia of Hindu religion and philosophy. Apart from the Gita, the

Mahābhārata contains several other portions such as the Anu-gītā, the Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma etc. which have popularized the Viṣṇu cult to a great extent. The section called Nārāyaṇī in the Śāntiparva contains an exposition of the Vaiṣṇava point of view. The Gītā explicitly declares Kṛṣṇa, the charioteer and guide of Arjuna, as another form of Viṣṇu. Trembling at the vision of the 'universal form' of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna addressed Him as Viṣṇu, and requested Him to assume the four-armed, beautiful form.¹¹

The Purāṇas

To the Paurāṇic literature goes the credit of popularizing the cult of devotion, and it would not be out of place to mention a few facts about it. The word 'Purāṇa' means 'the antique'. According to Yāska, it means 'new yore'¹² The Atharva-veda,¹³ the Śatapatha,¹⁴ the Chāndogya,¹⁵ the Rāmāyaṇa,¹⁶ the Mahābhārata,¹⁷ the Āśvalayana grhya-sūtra¹⁸ and the Manu-smṛti¹⁹ contain references to the word Purāṇa. It is said that Brahmā once gave the sages a lengthy discourse on the evolution and dissolution of the universe, the genealogy of the sages and kings, and the periods of Manus. Keeping that discourse in view, Vyāsa (Kṛṣṇa Dvāipāyana Vedavyāsa) composed a Purāṇa-saṃhitā containing many stories, traditions, tales and legends,²⁰ and taught it to his favourite disciple Romaharṣana whose three students also wrote such saṃhitās, one each.²¹ Thus four manuals were prepared on Paurāṇic literature, which gradually grew into eighteen volumes. Being based on the one original book written by Vyāsa, all these different books are traditionally known as Vyāsa's works. Just as the Bhārata and the Mahābhārata, the enlarged editions of Vyāsa's original historical poetry entitled 'Jaya', are held to be Vyāsa's composition, all the Purāṇas are attributed to Vyāsa's authorship inasmuch as they all are a sort of enlarged editions of his original work. The traditional adage that 'the son of Satyavati is the author of eighteen Purāṇas' is therefore true. The number of the stanzas of all the Purāṇas taken together is said approximately to be four lakhs.

Although the number of the topics discussed in the Purāṇas is said to be five,²² yet, strictly speaking, the number is greater, it being a fact that many subsidiary topics have been introduced in elucidation of the principal ones. In fact, the Purāṇas contain discourses on geography and astronomy, chantings and recitals, rivers and shrines, worship and adoration, heaven and hell, offerings and oblations, images and temples, knowledge and devotion, and so forth. Besides the principal Purāṇas, there are eighteen secondary Purāṇas also.

Scholars have also discovered some texts whose colophons are such that they need to be included in some Purāṇa or the other, though they are not actually included in the Purāṇas already known to us. The fact is that our religious literature could not be entirely saved from foreign invaders in the medieval period with the result that most of it was lost or spoilt.

The Viṣṇu-purāṇa, Padma-purāṇa, Garuda-purāṇa, Nārada-purāṇa, Varāha-purāṇa and Bhāgavata-purāṇa are supposed to be sāttvika in character; the Brahma-purāṇa, Brahmānda-purāṇa, Brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa, Mārkandeya-purāṇa, Bhavisya-purāṇa and Vāmana-purāṇa are rājasa; and the Śiva-purāṇa, Liṅga-purāṇa, Skanda-purāṇa, Agni-purāṇa, Matsya-purāṇa, and Kurma-purāṇa are tāmasa. Rāmānuja has quoted in the Vedārtha-saṅgraha a few lines from the Matsya-purāṇa, saying that Brahmā proclaimed the greatness of Viṣṇu in an age dominated by sattva, that he proclaimed his own greatness in an age dominated by rajas and that he proclaimed the greatness of Agni and Śiva in an age dominated by tamas.²³ Domination of one of the properties of prakṛti thus is, as Rāmānuja argues, the cause of difference in themes of the threefold purāṇas. These different ages called kalpas, are likewise different in character. The Purāṇas taught by Brahma in sāttvika age are the best ones. Since Brahmā is created by the Deity, and is subject to the authority of the scriptures, he is also a Kṣetrajña or a jīva; and as such he is invested with the three properties of prakṛti.²⁴ The sāttvika Purāṇas, specially the Bhāgavata, teach that Viṣṇu is the Supreme Being,²⁵ and that devotion to Him brings the devotee righteousness, wealth or wisdom as he desires. So nothing is difficult for a true devotee to attain. Both worldly pleasures and the bliss of emancipation may be easily attained by a lover of God. It may be noted in this connection that the only Purāṇa from which Rāmānuja has quoted in his Śrī-bhāṣya is the Viṣṇu-purāṇa.

The Pāñcarātra

The religious data contained in the scriptures, however, do not relate exclusively to Viṣṇu. They exhibit reverence for, and the supremacy of, other gods also. But there is a literature called the Pāñcarātra which seeks to establish the exclusive supremacy of Viṣṇu, and dwells upon devotion to Him alone. As the term Pāñcarātra is not widely known, it may be necessary to make a few observations on it.

The word 'pāñcarātra' is pretty old and we find it mentioned for the first time in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa where it is stated that the Supreme Puruṣa, Nārāyaṇa, desired in ages gone by to surpass all beings and to become all, through Puruṣa-medha which was otherwise called the Pāñcarātra.²⁶ The word 'Pāñcarātra' was first used as an adjective of Puruṣa-medha and then came to be used as an independent word. It means a sacrifice which is to be accomplished in five successive nights and in the following order :

Agniṣṭoma, then Ukthya, then Atirātra, then Ukthya once again, and lastly Agniṣṭoma for the second time. It thus starts with, and terminates in, Agniṣṭoma. Hence it was called 'Ubbhayato-jyoti'. It is also called 'Ubbhayata-ukthya' inasmuch as Ukthya is to be performed twice. Ukthya however takes more time than Agniṣṭoma ; and Atirātra occupies still greater time. The duration gradually increases from the first to the third day, but gradually decreases from the fourth to the fifth day. Hence it is called 'Yava-madhyā' i. e. that which resembles a grain of barley²⁷ whose middle portion is bigger than the remaining ones. Puruṣa-medha and Pāñcarātra were synonymous, and the sacrifice was performed with the chanting of the Puruṣa-sūkta.

The men to be sacrificed were praised with the chanting of the hymn in the Puruṣa-medha ; and when the brahmā-priest eulogised Puruṣa or Nārāyaṇa, a voice came from above, 'O embodied man, do not make these men stand by fire for sacrifice. In case you will, man will eat man'.²⁸ On hearing this celestial voice, the men-animals were set free,²⁹ and oblations of clarified butter were poured into fire for appeasing brahma, kṣatra, marut and tapas (representing the four castes).³⁰

It is thus clear that the Puruṣa-medha sacrifice did not demand any killing of life. Even today the followers of the pāñcarātra sect i. e. the Vaiṣṇavas abstain from destroying life in their rituals. The term 'pāñcarātra' has, however, been interpreted in various other ways as shown below :

1. Pāñcarātra is that in whose presence five scriptures of Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Bṛuddha, Āthata and Kāpāla lose their lustre.³¹
2. Just as night (rātri) comes to an end (pañcatva) at sunrise, similarly other scriptures come to an end at the rise of Pāñcarātra.³²
3. The word 'rātra' signifies knowledge which is of five types, so that Pāñcarātra is the name of the scripture which deals with five types of knowledge.³³

4. 'Rātra' means nescience and 'pacana' means destruction. Hence the scripture which destroys nescience is called Pāñcarātra.³⁴
5. Pāñcarātra is the scripture which admits the reality of God in five aspects : transcendence, immanence, emanation, descent and the consecrated idols.³⁵
6. Pāñcarātra is the scripture which teaches that on the realization of God, five nights meaning the functions of the five physical senses of the embodied soul are destroyed.³⁶
7. Pāñcarātra is so called because it embodies the five lectures delivered by Nārāyaṇa in five nights to Ananta, Garuda, Viṣvaksena, Brahmā and Rudra.³⁷
8. Pāñcarātra is that scripture which the Lord taught separately to Śāṇḍilya, Aupamanyava, Maunjyāyana, Kauśika and Bhāradvāja who are digits of His five weapons.³⁸

Pāñcarātra is not only of Vedic origin, but is also called the Ekāyana Veda i.e. a Veda where the Deity is said to be the only shelter for devotees.³⁹ The great sage Śāṇḍilya learnt it from Saṅkarsana at the end of Dvāpara and the beginning of Kali, and then taught it to Sumantu, Bhṛgu, Jaimini, Aupagāyana, and Maunjyāyana.

The Pāñcarātra deals with the following subjects :—

- (a) philosophical theory,
- (b) meditation,
- (c) temple architecture and iconography, and
- (d) certain other matters peculiar to the sect.

The Mahābhārata has termed Pāñcarātra as Mahopaniṣad or the great Upaniṣad, and indicates that the Pāñcarātra literature was held in high esteem in ancient times.⁴⁰ It is said to have been taught by Nārāyaṇa Himself. Apart from the name 'Mahopaniṣad', other names e.g. śāstra, tantra, āgama, and sāṃhitā are also given to Pāñcarātra. Thus we have such titles as Pāñcarātra śāstra, Pāñcarātra tantra, Pāñcarātra āgama, and Pāñcarātra sāṃhitā.

Numerous books were written on this branch of Vaiṣṇava literature, and they received distinctive names after their authors. Nārada Pāñcarātra contains, for instance, a reference to seven Pāñcarātras as Brahma, Śaiva, Kaumāra, Vasiṣṭha, Kāpila, Gautamiya and Nārada.⁴¹ Agni-purāṇa mentions twentyfive such names.⁴²

The literature on Pāñcarātra increased from more to more and came to include as many as about two hundred books. But one hundred and eight Pāñcarātra sāṃhitās are held to be canonical.

Like the Purāṇas, the Pāñcarātra is also divided into three sections respectively characterised as sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa. The saṃhitās taught by the Deity are called Divine. The Sāttvata saṃhitā, the Jayākhyā saṃhitā and the Pauṣkara saṃhitā are the best of the one hundred and eight books.⁴³ The Iṣvara-saṃhitā, the Padma saṃhitā and the Parameśvara-saṃhitā are respectively expositions of the three above-mentioned saṃhitās which, though separately compiled, form one complete scripture. Ācārya Yāmuna, Rāmānuja's grand-preceptor, proved the authoritativeness of the Pāñcarātra literature in his Agama-prāmāṇya. Later on Rāmānuja attempted to do the same in his commentary to the Brahma-sūtras 2.2.41 and 42⁴⁴ where he has quoted from the Sāttvata, Pauṣkara and Parama-saṃhitās. Still later Venkaṭanātha also made an effort to prove the authority of the Pāñcarātra, in his Pāñcarātra-rakṣā.⁴⁵ The Pāñcarātra literature is, however, held to be sacred and authoritative by all the Vaiṣṇavas. Only a few of the saṃhitās have so far been published.

The Writings of Ālvārs

Love of God knows no limitations—geographical or historical. Men of devotion may be born at all places and in all times. But there was a time when southern India surpassed other parts of the country in producing outstanding men of religion and devotion. They were definitely twelve in number. But their dates and order of succession are not beyond dispute. Since they remained deeply absorbed in devotion all the time, they came to be known by the name of Ālvārs, a Tamil word suggestive of their state of love. Their Sanskrit names were 1 Saroyogi, 2 Bhūtayogi, 3 Mahāyogi, 4 Bhaktisāra, 5 Śaṭhakopa, 6 Kulaśekhara, 7 Viṣṇucitta, 8 Godā, 9 Bhaktāṅghriṇu, 10 Munivāhana, 11 Parakāla and 12 Madhura Kavi.⁴⁶ They believed in

- (a) the temporary character of all worldly pleasures,
- (b) the permanence of bliss attained on emancipation,
- (c) the cessation of worldly miseries on the attainment of communion with the Supreme,
- (d) Self-surrender as the means to the Divine communion, and
- (e) the eligibility of all to the cult of devotion.

The collection of their works is called the Prabandham. Though it was written in Tamil language, it was held by the devotees in the same esteem as the Vedas, was considered to be a religious authority, and was a source of inspiration for devotion.

The alvārs lay stress on exclusive devotion, and they were followed by acāryas who admitted action and knowledge also as useful steps. Nāthamuni, the compiler of the Prabandham of the alvārs, was the first acārya. He was the son of Iśvaramuni, a devotee of Vira-nārāyaṇapuram. Yāmuna was the second apostle, and was called Alavandāra or a king among those immersed in love of God. A profound scholar as he was, he did pioneer work in the domain of devotional philosophy. The subjects he dealt with in his Siddhitraya were : consciousness, the individual soul and God. He established the validity of the Pāñcarātra literature in Āgama-pramānya ; epitomised the Gītā in Gitārthasaṅgraha; established the supremacy of Viṣṇu in Mahāpuruṣa-nirṇaya, and composed hymns in praise of the Divine couple viz. Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa, known as Catuśloki and Stotra-ratna.⁴⁷

A vast literature having a bearing on worship of Viṣṇu thus lay before Rāmānuja. He culled suitable material from all these sources at his disposal and prepared his own works of which the Śri-bhāṣya is recognised on all hands as the most outstanding.

As has been indicated above, the Sāra or Vedānta-sāra, the Dipa or Vedānta-dipa and the Śri-bhāṣya are commentaries on the Brahma-sūtra. But it is the Gadya-traya, Nitya or Bhagavadārādhana-krama and the Vedārthasaṅgraha, and not the Vedānta-sāra and the Vedānta-dipa as Keith has wrongly stated in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,⁴⁸ that are Rāmānuja's independent works.

The greatness of Rāmānuja really lies in the success of his effort to elucidate canonical scriptures. He was, however, not the first to do this sort of work. The theistic tradition existed even before the time of Śāṅkara, as is indicated by the stray references to it made by him.⁴⁹ But Rāmānuja, while admitting that many other scholars such as Tanka, Dramida, Guha, and Kapardi had made attempts similar to his,⁵⁰ discovered that much of the earlier theistic literature was lost and some was very brief. In consequence, he felt the need of elaborate exposition of the theistic literature that still existed. There is no doubt that he worked hard to fulfil the need for which the Vaiṣṇava community indeed owes him a debt of gratitude.

References

- इदं विष्णुविचक्रमे त्रेधा निदधे पदम् । (ऋग्वेद १. २२. १७)
- य उ विद्वातु पृथिवीमूर्त द्यामेको दाधार भूवनानि विश्वा ।
(ऋग्वेद १. १५४. ४.)
- न ते विष्णो जायमानो न जातो देव महिमः परमन्तमाप । (ऋग्वेद ७. ६६. २)
- दिवो वा विष्णु उत वा पृथिव्याः महो वा विष्णु उरोरन्तरिक्षात् ।
उभा हि हस्ता वसुना पुणस्वा प्रयच्छ दक्षिणादोत सव्यात् । (यजुर्वेद ५. १६)
- श्रीश्च ते लक्ष्मीश्च पत्न्या । (यजुर्वेद ३१. २२.)
- विष्णुः परमः । (ऐतरेय ब्राह्मणम् १. १. १)
- तत्केशवाय विद्यहे, नारायणाय धीमहि । तन्मो विष्णुः प्रचोदयात् ।
(कृष्ण-यजुर्वेद, मैत्रायणी संहिता, २. ६. ८.)
- सोध्वनः पारमाप्नोति तद् विष्णोः परमं पदम् । (कठ १. ३. ६)
- स एव सर्वं भूतान्तरात्मापहतपाप्मा दिव्यो देव एको नारायणः (सुवालोपनिषद्)
- सीता लक्ष्मीभंवान् विष्णुः (रामायणम् ६. १७. १६)
- (अ) पृति न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो (गीता ११. २४)
(आ) किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्तमिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव । तेनैव रूपेण
चतुर्भुजेन सहस्रवाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते । (गीता ११. ४६)
- पुराणम् कस्मात् ? पुरा नवं भवति (निरुतम् ३. १८)
- ऋचः सामानिच्छुदांसि पुराणं यजुषा सह ।
उच्चिष्ठाज्जिरे सर्वे दिवि देवा दिविश्रिताः (अथवंवेद ११. ७. २४)
- पुराणं वेदः सोयमिति किञ्चित्पुराणमाचक्षीत (शतपथ १३. ४. ३. १३)
- इतिहास पुराणं पंचमं वेदानां वेदम् । (आन्दोग्योपनिषद् ११. ५. ७६)
- एतच्छ्रुत्वा रहः सूतो राजानमिदमद्वयीत्
श्रूयतां यत्पुरावृतं पुराणेषु मया श्रुतम् (रामायणम्)
- पुराणे हि कथा दिव्या आदिवंशाश्च धीमताम् (महाभारतम्)
- ऋचो यजुंषि सामान्यर्थार्जिरसो ब्राह्मणानि
कल्पान् गाथा नाराशंसीरितिहास-पुराणानीति । (आश्वलायन गृह्णसूत्रम् ३. ६)
- आश्वलायानीतिहासांश्च पुराणान्यखिलानि च (मनुस्मृतिः ३. २. ३२)
- आस्थानैश्चाप्युपास्थानैर्गच्छाभिः कल्पशुद्धिभिः ।
पुराणसंहितां चक्रे पुराणार्थ-विशारदः (विष्णुपुराणम् ३. ६. १५)
- कश्यपः संहिता-कर्ता सावर्णिः शांसपायनः
रोमहर्यंणिका चान्या तिसूणां मूल-संहिता (विं पु० ३. ६. १८)
- सर्गश्च प्रतिसर्गश्च वंशो मन्वन्तराणिः च ।
वंशानुचरितं चैव पुराणं पंचलक्षणम् ॥

23. अग्ने: शिवस्य माहात्म्यं तामसेषु प्रकीर्त्यंते ।
 रात्रेषु च माहात्म्यमधिकं ब्रह्मणो विदुः
 सात्त्विकेषु च कल्पेषु माहात्म्यमधिकं हरे : ।
 (मत्स्य पुराणम्, वेदार्थसंग्रहे धृतम्, पृष्ठ १५७)

24. केचिद्ब्रह्मकल्पः संकीर्णः, केचित्सत्त्वप्रायाः केचिद् रजःप्राया इति कल्पविभाग
 मुक्त्वा सत्त्वरजस्तमोमयानां तत्त्वानां माहात्म्यवर्णनं च तत्त्वकल्पोक्त-पुराणेषु
 सत्त्वादि युग्मयेन ब्रह्मणा क्रियते……यो ब्रह्मणुं विदधाति पूर्वं यो वै वेदार्थच
 प्रहिणोति तद्भ्यं इति श्रुतेन्द्र्याणोपि सृज्यत्वेन शास्त्रवश्यत्वेन च क्षेत्रज्ञत्वं गम्यते
 (वेदार्थ-संग्रह : पृष्ठम् १५६)

25. रूपं यत्तत्प्राहु रव्यक्तमाद्यं ब्रह्म यजोतिनिष्टुं गुणं निविकारम् ।
 सत्तामात्रं निविशेषं निरीहं स त्वं साक्षाद् विष्णुरध्यात्मदीपः ।
 (भागवतम् १०. ३. २४)

26. स एतं पुरुषमेवं पंचरात्रं यज्ञ-क्रतुमपश्यत् तमाहरत्,
 तेनायज्ञत तेनेष्ट्रवात्यतिष्ठत् सर्वाणि भूतानि इदं सर्वं समभवत् ।
 (शतपथ ब्राह्मणम् १३. ५. १)

27. यवमध्यः पंचरात्रो भवति (श० ब्राह्मणम् १३. ५. ६)

28. पुरुष मा सन्तिष्ठिषो यदि संस्थापयिष्यसि पुरुष एव पुरुषमत्स्यति
 (श० ब्राह्मणम्)

29. पर्यन्तिकृताः पश्चो वभूवु रसंजप्ताः (श० ब्रा०)

30. तद्देवत्या आहुतीरजुहोत् । आज्येन जुहोति तेजो वा आज्यम् (श० ब्रा०)

31. पंचेरात्राणि शास्त्राणि रात्रीयन्ते महात्म्यपि ।
 तत्सन्निधी समारूपासौ तेन लोके प्रवर्तते । (पद्म-तन्त्रम्)

32. पंचत्वमय वा यद्दृद् दाव्यमाने दिवाकरे ।
 त्रहच्छन्ति रात्रयस्तद्दितराणि तदन्तिके । (पद्मतन्त्रम्) ।

33. रात्रं च ज्ञानवनं ज्ञानं पंचविंश्टं स्मृतम् ।
 तेनेदं पंचरात्रं च प्रवदन्ति मनोषिणः (नारद पंचरात्रम्)

34. रात्रिरज्ञानमित्युक्तं पंचेत्यज्ञाननाशकम् । (श्रीप्रश्नसंहिता)

35. तत्परव्यूह विभव स्वभावादि निरूपणम् ।
 पांचरात्रात्म्यं तन्मं मोक्षकफललक्षणम् । (प्रहिवुं ध्यसंहिता)

36. ग्रवाण्य तु परं तेजो यत्रैताः पंच रात्रयः
 नश्वन्ति पंचरात्रं तत् सर्वज्ञानविनाशनम् (विष्णुसंहिता)

37. पंचापि पूर्वगोक्तं दिवारात्रं जगत्प्रभुः
 अध्यापयामास यतस्तत्स्तमुनिषुं गवाः
 शास्त्रं सर्वं जनैलोके पंचरात्रमितीयंते । (ईश्वर-संहिता)

38. पंचायुधांशः ते पंच शांडिल्यश्चौषगायनः ।
मौज्यायनः कौशिकश्च भारद्वाजश्च योगिनः ।

39. (अ) मोक्षायनाय वे पन्था एतदन्धो न विचारे ।
तस्मादेकायनं नाम प्रवदन्ति मनोविष्णुः (ईश्वर-संहिता)
(आ) यस्मन्नेको मोक्षमार्गो वेदे प्रोक्तः सनातनः ।
मदाराघनरूपेण तस्मादेकायनं भवेत् (श्रीप्रदनसंहिता)

References from 31 to 39 quoted from article XXV of J.R.A.S., 1911.

40. इदं महोपनिषदं चतुर्वेद-समन्वितम् ।
(श्रीभाष्ये २. २. ४२ उद्दृतं महाभारतवचनम्)

41. ब्राह्मं शीवं च कौमारं वाशिष्ठं कापिलं परम् ।
मौतमीयं नारदीयमिदं सर्वविष्णुं स्मृतम् (नारदपंचरात्रम्)

42. व्यस्तानि मुनिभिलोके पंचविशतिसंख्या ।
हयशीर्णं तन्त्रमाद्यं तन्त्रं चैलोक्यमोहनम् ।
वैभवं पौष्टकरं तन्त्रं प्राज्ञादं गार्थं-गालवम् ।
नारदीयं च श्रीप्रदनं शांडिल्यं चैश्वरं तथा ।
सत्योक्तं शीनकं तन्त्रं वासिष्ठं ज्ञानसागरम् ।
स्वायम्भूवं कापिलं च ताक्षं नारायणीयकम् ।
श्राव्रेयं नारसिंहारूपमानन्दारूपं तथा रुणम् ।
बोधायनं तथाष्टांगं विद्वोक्तं तस्य सारतः । (अग्निपुराणम् अध्यायः ३६)

43. सात्वतं पौष्टकरं चैव जयारूपं तन्त्रमुत्तमम्,
रत्नव्रयमिति स्यात्म् ।

44. धुतिसिद्धस्यैवायितवात्सल्यनिमित्तस्वेच्छाविष्णुसंग्रह—रूपजन्मनोभिधानात्
तदभिधायिशास्त्रप्रामाण्यस्याप्रतिषेधः ।.....अतः स भगवान्—तदद्यं—
यायात्म्यावबोधिपंचरात्रं शास्त्रं स्वयमेव निरममीतेर्ति निरवदम् ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् २. २. ४२)

45. अतः कृत्स्नं पंचरात्रं प्रमाणम् (श्री पंचरात्ररक्षा, पृष्ठम् ४३)

46. Arranged according to Alvar-vaibhava by P.B. Anugrahaśāraṇa of Conjecverum.

47. Rāmānuja listened to, or rather overheard, for the first time, the stanzas of this beautiful hymn recited by Mahāpūrṇa in the temple of Devarāja at Kāñci, and was so enamoured of the theme and style that he forthwith enquired of the reciter who the composer of the poem was and whether an interview with him could be granted.

48.Of special importance are only the Vedāntadipa, the Vedāntasāra, the Vedārtha-saṅgraha, which are independent works.....
(Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics edited by James Hastings Vol. X, Page 572 Edinburgh, 1918).

49. अत्र केचिदनादि मत्परमिति पदं छिन्दन्ति
 बहुत्रीहिणोक्तेयं मतुप आनन्दव्यमनिष्टम् स्यादिति ।
 प्रयंविशेषं च दर्शयन्ति अहं वासुदेवार्थ्या पराशक्तियंत्य तन्मत्परिमिति ।
 (गीतायां शंकर-भाष्यम् १३. १२)

अहं परो यस्य तन्मत्परम् (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १३. १२)

50. यथोदितकमपरिणातभक्त्येकलभ्य एव भगवद्बोधायन—टक—द्रमिड—
 मुहूर्देव—कपर्दि—भारचि—प्रभूत्यविगीतशिष्ट परिगृहीत……
 श्रुतिनिकरनिर्दिशितोयं पन्थाः । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १५४)

CHAPTER II

GENERAL SURVEY

I

Epistemology :

The sources of knowledge in different schools—Perception—Visiṣṭādvaita realism—Dreams—Inference—Comparison and presumption included in inference—Verbal testimony—Origin of words—Reality is qualified.

About the nature of the Ultimate Reality both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja differ greatly from each other. The former views it as unqualified ; the latter as qualified. When Rāmānuja says that Reality is qualified, he means that it has certain attributes. All the three means of knowledge, *viz.*, perception, inference and scriptural testimony, according to him, corroborate this view. An account of Rāmānuja's view of these three means of knowledge is given below.

The Sources of knowledge in different schools.

Gotama, the founder of Nyāya philosophy admitted four means of knowledge : perception, inference, analogy and verbal testimony.¹ Kanāda, the founder of the Vaiśeṣika system of philosophy, as the tradition goes, admitted only two :—inference and perception. In this connection it may be observed that although his aphorism 1-1.3 clearly recognises the Vedas as a means of proof², yet the later philosophers of the Vaiśeṣika school included verbal testimony and analogy within inference as is evident from the Bhāṣa-pariccheda of Viśvanātha.³ The Saṅkhyā recognised three ways of knowing : perception, inference and scriptural testimony.⁴ Patañjali, the founder of Yoga philosophy, agreed with Saṅkhyā.⁵ The Prabhākara school of Mīmāṃsā added presumption as the fifth means of knowledge to the four of the Nyāya.⁶ The Bhāṭṭa School of Mīmāṃsā and Advaita Vedānta* added non-perception (anupalabdhi) as the sixth instrument of knowledge.⁷ The Purāṇas added two more—sambhava (inclusion of the lower within the higher, and aitihya (tradition), and this reached

*Vasiṣṭha, however, held perception (anubhava) to be the only means to the realization of Reality.

the total of eight.⁸ But Rāmānuja sticks to three only: perception, inference and scriptural testimony.⁹ Maddhva¹⁰ and Nimbārka¹¹ agreed with Rāmānuja. The system of Vallabha did not admit any definite number of the sources of knowledge, but laid the greatest emphasis on scriptural testimony.¹² The Acintya-bhedābheda school also believed in the three ways of knowing—perception, inference and scriptural testimony.¹³

(A) *Perception*

It is the ātman that cognises sound, touch, colour, taste and smell;¹⁴ it is again the ātman that thinks and discriminates.¹⁵ This is the view of the *Upaniṣads*; and on the authority of these scriptures Badarāyaṇa holds the same view.¹⁶ Rāmānuja only follows suit.¹⁷ The ātman does not, however, come into direct contact with the external objects but with the mind. The mind in union with the soul has contact with the sense-organs which in turn come into contact with the external objects.¹⁸ The sense-organs are means of knowledge in so far as they thus enable the ātman to cognise. They are of two kinds—the external and the internal. Those sense-organs which lie on the surface of the body are external. The auditory organ lies in the orifice of the ear, the tactful is spread over the skin, the visual is in the eye, the taste-organ is in the tongue and the olfactory one is in the nose. The mind, owing to its peculiar internality is rightly called the inner sense (*antah karana*). All these six organs are but means of knowledge as distinguished from the knower which is the ātman itself.

According to Sāṅkhya system, cognition belongs to buddhi.¹⁹ It is in association with the buddhi that the individual soul (*puruṣa*) cognises but does so only metaphorically.²⁰ According to Nyāya, cognition is an adventitious quality of the ātman, which is due to psycho-physical contact.²¹ According to Advaita Vedānta, the ātman in its noumenal aspect is pure consciousness.²² It is in its phenomenal aspect that it becomes cognisant of objects.²³ But Rāmānuja differs by holding that cognition is an attribute of the soul.

Perception is of three kinds: God's perception, perception of the yogis and perception of ordinary persons.²⁴ The last, again, is of two kinds: determinate (*savikalpa*) and indeterminate (*nirvikalpa*). "The only difference between indeterminate perception and determinate perception lies", Dr. J.N. Sinha explains, "in the fact that the former is the perception of the first individual among a number of objects, belonging to the same class, while the latter is the perception of the second individual, third individual and so on.....In determinate perception we perceive in addition to the object possessing a structure,

and the structure itself, the character of the structure as being common to the whole class.²⁵ In the case of indeterminate perception, an object is perceived for the first time, so that what is perceived is only the peculiar arrangement of its parts (*samsthāna*). In the case of the determinate perception, on the other hand, the arrangement of the parts of an object is comprehended not as its peculiar attribute, but as the attribute of a class of similar objects,²⁶ 'which is called *anuvṛtti* and which really differentiates determinate perception from perception of indeterminate kind. There is, however, a difference of opinion as to the nature of *nirvikalpa* *pratyakṣa* as understood by Rāmānuja. According to some, by *nirvikalpa* perception Rāmānuja means 'the apprehension of a thing at the first moment of cognition', while others take his meaning to be 'the apprehension of the first instance.' However that may be, Rāmānuja holds that indeterminate perception is, really, inadequate apprehension of things, involving the knowing of only some but not all of their qualities.²⁷ He also holds that this kind of perception admits of specification²⁸, and thus differs fundamentally from the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school which conceives indeterminate perception as absolutely non-specific apprehension.

In place of the six kinds of contact between the sense-organs and the external objects admitted by the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, only two kinds are accepted in the Visiṣṭādvaita school. They are: conjunction (*samyoga*) as in the case of visual perception of a lotus, and dependence on the conjunct (*samyuktāśrayaṇa*) as in the case of perception of colour etc. of the lotus.²⁹

But the question arises as to whether the object reaches the sense-organs, or the latter reaches the former. The answer is this. In the case of our perception of smell, taste, touch and sound, an object reaches the sense-organs. In the perception of the fragrance of a jessamine flower, for instance, the air laden with the fragrance comes in contact with the nose; and we sense it to be fragrant. The juice of an unripe mango comes in contact with the tongue; and we have the sour taste. Ice comes in contact with our skin and gives us the sensation of coolness. The sound produced by the blowing of a conch is conveyed by the air into our ears. The process in visual perception is however different. The eye does not wait for the object to approach it, but itself reaches it, however distant it may be. Just as the sun reaches, through its rays, the distant regions illumined by it, similarly the ocular rays reach in no time even the remotest objects.³⁰ The Nyāya also accepts this view.³¹

Visiṣṭādvaita includes memory in perception, and, therefore, does not recognise it as an independent means of knowledge. Recog-

nition (pratyabhijña) is also viewed to come under perception on the understanding that it is a combination of direct perception (anubhava) and recollection (smṛti). If I see Soma-datta today after a year and recognise him, I have the kind of knowledge known as the pratyabhijña which obviously involves nothing but perception and memory. Conjecture, doubt and intuition are also included in perception.

Visiṣṭādvaita Realism

According to Visiṣṭādvaita, there is no knowledge which does not correspond to a real object. Even erroneous experiences are no exception to this rule. This is the view which is embodied in the doctrine of 'Satkhyāti' according to which knowledge necessarily relates to the real. What then is the nature of erroneous perception? We may mistake a distant rope for a snake, but on approaching it we find our previous knowledge to be erroneous. Now Rāmānuja holds that in the case of erroneous experience the object is real in so far as some of the attributes of a snake are existent in the rope; but they being only a few of the attributes of a snake, we cannot call the object snake. That is why our knowledge of a rope as a snake is erroneous. It is not erroneous in the sense that it does not correspond to a really existing object.³² Further, the rope and the snake do contain in common a certain measure of the five elements so that the former exists partially in the latter and vice versa. When an object possesses some aspect (eka-deśa) of another object, they are said to be similar to each other.³³ According to the doctrine of quintuplication (pañcikarana), one element contains, in some degree, portions of other elements. Earth for example is constituted by the earth element, but it contains in addition, water, air etc. On the basis of the view, the Visiṣṭādvaita holds that any one thing has the qualities of all other things. So things are, in a sense, similar to one another. The similarity in some cases is so vivid as to produce confusion. This explains our erroneous perception of silver in a nacre. The silver-portion is, however, so meagre in the nacre that we do not use nacre as silver. When the nacreous qualities are perceived in profusion in a nacre, our error disappears.

On dreams

Bādarāyaṇa's statement that a dream is māya³⁴ has been differently interpreted by Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. For Śaṅkara, māya is unreal from the absolute viewpoint; and dream is equally so.³⁵ He holds that Brahman, the basis of all phenomenal apprearence, is alone real, because it does not change; whereas the appearances being of a

changing and evanescent nature, are false. *Being* is absolutely real, whereas *becoming* is only relatively so. Whatever is subject to time, place and causation is said to possess relative existence. A dream vanishes when a person wakes up; hence its reality is relative. Even the world consisting of particular things vanishes before a man on whom true knowledge has dawned. The reality of empirical world cannot, therefore, be regarded as absolute when compared with that of Brahman. The absolute being is called real and relative illusory by the followers of Advaita. Dreams are thus unreal, according to Śaṅkara. The author of the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* had already declared the dream phenomena to be unreal. "The waking man" as Dr. B.L. Ātreya has explained, "considers the dream experiences unreal and visionary, while to the subject of the dream its own world is really real, and the waking experience is regarded as unreal and non-existent."³⁶

According to Viśiṣṭādvaita, on the other hand, the world is not a mere appearance: but definitely real. Things such as the sun and the moon, the oceans and the mountains do not cease to exist for us even when we attain true knowledge. On the contrary, a man of true knowledge sees in every thing the grandeur (*vibhuti*) of God.³⁷ Rāmānuja thus holds that the world of experience is real. According to him, the phenomena of dream are very astonishing (*māyā*). The dreamer experiences objects that are not experienced by others in common with him. Bādarāyaṇa calls a dream *māyā*, because its nature is partially manifest. Only God, the Supreme Person, can project such strange objects.³⁸ An individual soul also can work such a miracle at will when it attains emancipation, though its creativity is in a state of suspense when it is in a state of bondage. According to Rāmānuja, in the dream state the dreamer is made by God to enjoy pleasure or suffer pain, as the case may be, as a consequence of his minor actions.³⁹ Dreams are also believed by Rāmānuja to indicate the good or the bad future of the dreamer. In this respect the dreamer has no control of his own over his dreams.

While the author of the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* regards wish-fulfilment as the cause of dreams, Rāmānuja holds that the cause is the will of God. The dream objects are thus real for him, because they are created by God. Rāmānuja's view that God is the creator of dreams is akin to the doctrine of imported dreams. The others are 'reproductive' (*anubhūta*), 'conative' (*Prārthita*), 'creative' (*Kalpita*), 'physiological' (*doṣaja*) and 'congenital' (*Bhāvaja*).⁴⁰

All cognition is thus real. The *acārya* has set forth his views on this point in details, but has not refuted the views of others. The views opposed to Rāmānuja's are chiefly these :—

- (a) *Atma-Khyāti* of the *Yogacāras*,*
- (b) *Asat-Khyāti* of the *Madhyamikas*,
- (c) *Akhyāti* of the *Mimāmsakas*,
- (d) *Anyathā-Khyāti* of the *Naiyāyikas*, and
- (e) *Anirvacaniya-Khyāti* of *Advaita* of Śāṅkara.⁴¹

Professor J.N. Sinha has enumerated and explained five more views in his book 'Indian Psychology'. They are :—*Alaukika-Khyāti*, *Sadasatkhyāti*, *viveka-Khyāti*, *Prasiddhārtha-Khyāti*, and *Sat-Khyāti*. It is needless to say that the last view in this group is advocated by Rāmānuja.⁴²

(B) *Inference*

The second source of knowledge is inference. Its basis is perceptual knowledge. As perception judges its objects as qualified, so does inference. Rāmānuja distinguishes two kinds of his inference : (a) inference from the observation of particular cases *i.e.*, inductive, and (b) inference resting on general truths *i.e.*, deductive.⁴³ Inference is again twofold : (a) inference for one's own sake and (b) inference for the sake of others.⁴⁴

Knowing the concomitance of fire and smoke, Devadatta goes to a mountain. There he sees a cloud of smoke rising from the peak, and recollects the relation of smoke and fire. Observing smoke on the peak, he infers that it contains fire. This is an instance of inference for oneself. The inference for others consists of five premises *viz.* (a) proposition (*pratijñā*), (b) reason (*hetu*), (c) example (*udāharana*), (d) application (*upanaya*) and (e) conclusion (*nigamana*). The *Viśiṣṭādvaita* does not, however, attach much importance to the number of premises in a syllogism.⁴⁵

Reason plays an important part in syllogism. If it is not valid, the inference will be unsound. The conclusion that there is fire in the mountain drawn from the existence of a cloud of dust therein will be wrong. False reason appearing in the guise of a true reason is a fallacy (*hetvābhāsa*). It is of five kinds :

1. Unproved (*asiddha* as in 'The lotus of the sky is fragrant because it is a lotus such as the lotus of a lake').

* Vasiṣṭha also advocated *Ātma-Khyāti*

2. Contradictory (viruddha) as in 'Matter is eternal, because it is fashioned like time'.
3. Inconclusive (Anaikāntika) as in 'Sound is eternal, because it is knowable like time.'
4. Futeile (Kālatyayāpadiṣṭa) as in 'Fire is cold, because it is a substance like water.'
5. One that has a stronger argument on the other side (prakaraṇasama) as in 'God is non-eternal, because He is devoid of eternal qualities.'

Comparison

The followers of Gotama admit comparison (upamāna) as a distinct source of right knowledge.⁴⁶ Knowledge by comparison is the knowledge of a thing through its similarity to another thing previously known. Recollecting that a bos geavaeus (gavaya) is like a cow, a man concludes that the cow-like animal which he is seeing in a forest is a bos geavaeus. This is an instance of knowledge through comparison. But Viśiṣṭādvaita does not admit it as a separate source of knowledge. It may be included, says Srinivāsadasa, either in perception or in inference or in verbal testimony. It may be included in perception because it involves recollection. Since comparison requires a sort of concomitance, it may be included in inference. Its inclusion in verbal testimony is also admissible on the ground that recollection may be due to instruction by somebody else.⁴⁷

Presumption

Presumption is held to be an independent means of knowledge by the schools of Mīmāṃsā and Advaita Vedānta. It consists in the deduction of one thing from the declaration of another. If Devadatta is found fat despite his taking no food during the day, it should be presumed that he eats at night. But the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta does not regard presumption as a separate means of knowledge, but, like Gotama, includes it in inference.⁴⁸

It should be added here that according to the Viśiṣṭādvaita school, the object of inference is not unqualified but qualified. The reason is that inference is based on memory which in its turn is based on perception, the object of which according to this school, cannot but be qualified (saviśeṣa).

(C) Verbal Testimony

The third means of knowledge is Śabda (word) which is either sacred or secular. The Vedas, according to the orthodox opinion

which Rāmānuja shares, are not books of human authorship. God gives the Vedas to Brahma in the beginning of each Kalpa.⁵⁰ The Vedas are divided into two sections. One of these deals with the sacrificial rites and rituals : the other with the nature of the Lord.⁵⁰

The contents of the Vedas are threefold—hymns (mantra), explanations (arthavāda) and injunctions (vidhi). A hymn suggests the work to be done. The value of arthavāda lies in either commanding the desirable or condemning the forbidden. In other words, it is prompting and dissuading respectively for commission and omission of a particular act. An injunction consists in directing a person to do what is beneficial to the individual or society.⁵¹

The Vedic statements are all authoritative and reliable. There are other traditional scriptures and they are also to be depended upon. The Purāna and the Itihāsa are also acceptable.⁵² Similarly the Agamas also are held in high esteem in the Viśiṣṭādvaita school. In the Śri-bhāṣya, Rāmānuja has argued at length the authoritative-ness of Pāñcarātra scripture.⁵³

Śrinivāsadasa holds that even the secular word is a means of right knowledge, provided that it has the merit of expectancy, compatibility and juxtaposition.

One particular word cannot convey its sense in the absence of other words required to complete an idea. The word 'lotus' cannot give us the idea of a complete and concrete situation. We expect to know more about it. The meaning is complete when we hear some such thing as 'I see a lotus in the pool.' Hence the importance of the element of expectancy in a statement.

Similarly all words should be consistently used. A sentence devoid of consistency cannot be a means of right knowledge. 'Fire burns hay' is an instance of compatibility, whereas 'water burns the fuel' is not.

The third quality for a secular statement is juxtaposition. The words are to be uttered one after the other till the sentence is complete. If the proposition 'Bring me a ring' is divided into three parts, and each part is uttered after every half an hour, it conveys no meaning, and so cannot be regarded as a verbal testimony. Isolated words do not convey sense. They are therefore not helpful.

The Nyāya-vaiśeṣika school also regards these three qualities as essential to a secular word's serving as a source of right knowledge.

In this attempt to establish that the object of knowledge derived from verbal testimony is also qualified, Rāmānuja resorts to grammar and the theory of the origin of words.⁵⁴ He seems to follow Śākataṭyāna and Yāska who hold that words originate from verbal roots.⁵⁵ He then argues that every word is derived from the definite union of a root and an affix. Every suffix gives some specific character to the verb to which it is added. The suffix 'tr' for instance, gives a particular shade of meaning to the verb 'Kṛ', and as a result we have the word 'Kartṛ' meaning a doer. This is true of all affixes added to verbal roots. The suffix 'man' in Brahman must, according to Rāmānuja, add some character to the root 'Bṛhi', and the word 'Brahman', the product of the union of the two, must necessarily stand for a qualified object. Hence according to verbal testimony too, the object of knowledge is qualified (saviśeṣa).

But some words originate from onomatopoeia, others from the union of two or more words or particles ; still others are the results of haplology. Even the ancient philologist Gārgya whom Yāska, the author of the Nirukta, summarily dismisses, suggests that a word should not necessarily be derived from a verbal root.⁵⁶ Yāska, Śākataṭyāna and Pāṇini seem, however, to lay special emphasis on action. In consequence, they hold that even substantives are based on verbs signifying action. Rāmānuja is in agreement with them.

Rāmānuja makes special use of verbal testimony in proving the existence of God. How can we know with our cogent logic a thing which transcends the sense-organs ? The syllogistic arguments do not carry us further. The ācārya has, therefore, laid stress on verbal testimony. Like Śāṅkara, Rāmānuja has understood pratyakṣa and anumāna of the Brahma-sūtra as śruti and smṛti respectively ;⁵⁷ and in this respect both differ from the Naiyāyikas who understand the two terms as respectively signifying perception and inference.⁵⁸

Rāmānuja says that arguments are ineffectual inasmuch as they may be refuted by counter-arguments. Human arguments, he opines, are production of human intellect ; and the arguments advanced by a person are liable to be refuted by another person.⁵⁹ Rāmānuja therefore adheres to the scriptural testimony in matters of a transcendental nature. The arguments put forth to support the scriptural findings are, however, to be respected ; and the ācārya has cited Manu in corroboration of the view.⁶⁰

It has already been seen how Rāmānuja has employed perception and inference to prove the determinate nature of the object of

knowledge. It remains to see how he employs the third source of knowledge *i.e.*, the scriptural testimony, to prove the same. It may just be noted that, according to Rāmānuja, the scriptural testimony is the only infallible proof with regard to the nature of ultimate Reality. The scriptures tell us the truth,⁶¹ he says and adds that they are more affectionate even than thousands of parents.⁶² They teach us that ultimate Reality is qualified. The Chāndogya, for example, declares that It is existent (Sat)⁶³; the Br̥hadāraṇyaka states that It is bliss (ānanda) and consciousness (jñāna)⁶⁴; and the Taittiriya mentions that It is infinite (ananta).⁶⁵ If Reality were unqualified, as Śaṅkara holds, how then could It be thus predicated? A predicate qualifies and characterises the subject. The scriptures ascribe to Reality names such as Brahman, Bhūtān; and the very naming presupposes characterisation. The word 'Brahman' suggests that It is great and It nurtures the creation.⁶⁶ Reality is thus qualified. The denial of sattava, rajas and tamas to Reality is not a denial of Its essential qualities such as truth, consciousness, bliss and infinitude.

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27. निविकल्पं नाम केनचित् विशेषेण वियुक्तस्य ग्रहणं न सर्वविशेषरहितस्य
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. १.)
28. (अ) निविकल्पमपि सविशेषविषयमेव सविकल्पके स्वस्मिन्ननुभूतपदार्थं-विशिष्ट-
प्रतिसन्धान-हेतुत्वात् । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. १.)

28. (व) निविकल्प-प्रत्यक्षेषि सविशेषमेव वस्तु प्रतीयतेन्यथा सविकल्पके सोयमिति पूर्वाविगत-प्रकारविशिष्ट-प्रत्ययानुपपत्तेः (वेदार्थसंग्रहः, पृष्ठम् ४६)

29. तत्र वृद्धा विदामासुः संयोगं संनिकर्षणाम् ।
संयुक्ताश्रयणं चेति यथासम्भवमूल्यताम् । (तत्त्वरत्नाकरः यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका-टीकायामुद्दृतः)

30. सूर्योदये सकलदिग्ब्यापिन्याः प्रभाया इवेन्द्रियवृत्ते रपितादृश-वेगातिशयांगीकारेणादोषात् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिकायां प्रकाशटीका)

31. तत्र यद्यपि रज्जवां सर्पिशानां विद्यमानत्वेन विषयस्य सत्यत्वं तथापि तदंशानामलपत्वेन तदायं सर्पे इति व्यवहारो न भवति अतएव तस्य भ्रमत्वं न तु विषयासत्यत्वम् । (यतीन्द्र-मतदीपिकायां प्रकाश-टीका)

32. दृष्टो हि लाघवातिशयेन तेजसो वेगातिशयो यदुदयाचलचूडावलविद्येव मृग्युमालिनि भुवनोदरेष्वालोकः प्रसरीसरीति । तद्वन्नयनोन्मीलनानन्तरं नयनरहमयः सूर्यमण्डलं प्राप्यैव प्रकाशयन्ति (तर्कभाषा-प्रकाशटीका)

33. तदेव सदृशं तस्य यत् तद्-द्रव्यैक-देशभाक् । (प्रकाशटीका)

34. मायामात्रं तु कात्स्वर्णेनानभिव्यक्तस्वरूपत्वात् । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ३. २. ३)

35. नेतदस्ति यदुक्तं संघे सृष्टिः पारमार्थिकीति ।
मायैव संघे सृष्टिनं परमार्थगम्बोध्यस्ति । (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् ३. २. ३)

36. Yoga-Vāsistha and Its Philosophy, page 56,

37. अकर्म-प्रतिहतज्ञानो मुक्तोधिकारि-लोकान् ब्रह्मविभूतिभूतानुभूय यथाकामं तृप्यति । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४. ४. १८)

38. मायाशब्दो ह्याश्चयंवाची……एवंविद्याश्चयंरूपा सृष्टिः सत्यसंकल्पस्य परम-पुरुषस्येवोपचाते न जीवस्य । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. २. ३.)

39. अतो जीवानामल्पाल्प-कर्मनिःशुणा-फलानुभवार्थं तावन्मात्रकालावसानान्तरेकानुभावानर्थानुत्पादयति । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. २. ५.)

40. Dreams Mainly From Hindu Point of View by R. Bharadwaj (Proceedings of the Indian Philosophical Congress 1937, pages 261—269).

41. (अ) रुपात्यन्तराणां दूषणानि तेस्तर्वादिभिरेव प्रपञ्चितानीति न तत्र यत्नः क्रियते । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. १)

(ब) आत्मरूपातिरसतरूपाति रुप्यातिः रुपातिरन्यथा ।
तथानिवंचनरूपातिरित्येतत् रुपातिर्पंचकम् ॥
योगाचारा माध्यमिकास्तथा मीमांसका अपि ।
नैयायिका मायिनश्च प्रायः रुपातीः क्रमाञ्जगुः ॥
(प्रकाश-टीकायामुद्दृतं पञ्चद्वयम्)

42. अतः सर्वे विज्ञानजातं यथार्थम् ।

43. नाप्यनुमानं विशेषतो दृष्टं सामान्यतोदृष्टं वा (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. ३.)

44. तदेतदनुमानं स्वार्थं परार्थं चेति द्विषा विभज्य केचिदाहुः (यतीन्द्रमत०)

45. मूदु-मध्यम-कठोर-धियां विस्तरसंग्रहाभ्यां व्यवहार-उपयोगत इत्यनियम एव ।
(यतीन्द्रमत-दीपिका)

46. प्रसिद्धसाधम्याति साध्यसाधनमूष्मानम् । (न्यायसूत्रम् १. १. ६.)

47. स्मरणाहृष्टत्वात्स्थ प्रत्यक्षेन्तभावः । व्याप्तिग्रहणापेक्षत्वादनुमानेन्तभावः । वाक्यजन्यत्वाच्छब्दे चान्तभावः । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका)

48. अनुमानेर्याप्तिसम्भवात् । (न्यायसूत्रम् २. १. २.)

49. यो वै वेदार्थं प्रदिशोति तस्मै (इवेताश्वतर०)

50. आराधनकर्मप्रतिपादकं पूर्वकाण्डम् । आराध्यप्रतिपादकमुत्तरकाण्डम् । (यतीन्द्रमत-दीपिका)

51. विविधिविधायकः । (न्यायसूत्रम् २. १. ६४)

52. इतिहासपुराणयोर्वेदोपवृंहणयोश्चायमर्थं उच्यते । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः, पृष्ठम् २४२)

53. कथमेवं ब्रूवाणो वादारायणो वेदविदये सरो वेदान्तवेच्च-परद्रह्मभूत-वासु-देवोपासनाच्चनादि-प्रतिपादनपरस्य सात्त्वत-शास्त्रस्य अप्राप्यायं वृयात् । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. २. ४२)

54. (अ) अर्थभेद-तत्संगेविशेष - बोधनकृत - पदवाक्यस्वरूपता । - सब्दप्रमाणभावस्य शब्दस्य निविशेष-वस्तु-बोधना-उसामर्थ्याति न निर्विशेष-वस्तुनि शब्दः प्रमाणम् । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः, पृष्ठम् ४६)

(ब) प्रकृति-प्रत्ययरूपेण पदस्यैवानेक-विशेष-गम्भिरत्वात् (पूर्वोक्तम्)

55. तत्र नामान्यास्यातजानीति शाकटायनो नैरुत्तसमयश्च । (निरुत्तम् १. ४.)

56. न सर्वाणीति गाग्यः (पूर्वोक्तम्)

57. (अ) अपि संराधने प्रत्यक्षानुमानाभ्याम् (ब्रह्मसूत्रम्)

(ब) कथं पुनरवगम्यते संराधनकाले पश्यन्तीति ? प्रत्यक्षानुमानाभ्यां श्रुति-स्मृतिभ्यामित्यर्थः । (शांकरभाष्यम् ३. २. २४)

(स) अपि च संराधने सम्यक् प्रीणाने भवितरूपापन्ने निदिष्यासन एवास्य साक्षात्कारो नाभ्यत्रेति श्रुतिस्मृतिभ्यामवगम्यते (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. २. २३)

58. (अ) दर्शयतश्चैवं प्रत्यक्षानुमाने (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ४. ४. २१)

(ब) विद्वत्प्रत्यक्षात्कारणाभाव-लिगाच्च । ब्रह्मवैवत्ते च न हासो न च वृद्धिर्वा मूकतानां विद्यते क्वचित् विद्वत्प्रत्यक्षसिद्धत्वात् कारणाभाव-तोनुमा । (मध्वभाष्यम्) निखिलजग्नियमनरूपो व्यापारः परमपुरुषा-साधारण इति दर्शयतः श्रुतिस्मृती । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४. ४. २०)

59. पुरुषवृद्धि-मूलतर्कोकावलम्बनस्य तथैव देशान्तरकालान्तरेषु त्वदधिकतमतकं-कुशल - पुरुषोत्त्रे खित-तकं - दूष्यत्वसम्भावनया तकप्रतिष्ठानदोषादनिमोक्षो दुनिवारः (श्रीभाष्यम्)

60. (अ) प्रतीन्द्रियेण शास्त्रयेव प्रमाणम् (श्रीभाष्यम्)

(ब) आपं धर्मोपदेशं च वेद-शास्त्राविरोधिना यस्तक्षणानुसंधते स धर्मं वेद नेतरः । (मनुः १३/१०६)

61. यथाभूतवादि हि शास्त्रम् ।
62. मातापितृमहत्वे भ्योपि वत्सलतरं शास्त्रम् ।
63. सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीत् (छान्दोग्य ६. २. १)
64. विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म । (बृहदारण्यक ३. ६. ३४)
65. सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म (तेत्तिरीय २. १. १)
66. बृहत्वाद् बृहणत्वाच्च यद् रूपं ब्रह्मसंजितम् ।
तस्मै नमस्ते सर्वात्मन् योगिचिन्त्याविकारिणे ॥ (विष्णुपुराणम् १. १२. ५५)

II

Cosmology

God, the efficient and the material cause—Evolutionary change in God's modes—The process of evolution—Sense organs—Evolution of gross elements—The process of quintuplication—Rāmānuja's rejection of the atomic theory—Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita—Sāṅkhya and Viśiṣṭādvaita—The 'why' of creation.

The question as to whence this universe came into being was under discussion even in the age of the *Rgveda*. How beautiful Viśvakarmā Bhauvana's interrogation is—"Where did the creator sit down to forge the creation and with what implements? Which was that forest and which was that tree of which the Deity made this world?"¹ The problem of the origin of this world seemed to be so intricate and insoluble at times that once Prajāpati, the author of the famous *Nāsadiya-sūkta* was compelled to own his defeat when he said, "Who can know the origin of this world, who can say? It is also doubtful whether the very Supervisor of this world in the highest heaven knows it or not."²

The sages postulated a creator of the world. Many passages bearing on the theme can be cited from the scriptures.³ God is referred to as creator in the *Gāyatri* text which is held to be the essence of the *Vedas*.⁴ The *Śvetāśvatra Upaniṣad* says the same thing.⁵ The creator is termed as *Puruṣa*, *Skambha*, *Brahman* and so on. The *Yajurveda* says that this universe is the creation of *Puruṣa*.⁶ *Atharva-veda* says that *Skambha* has propped up the heaven and the earth, the intermediate space and the directions; and that He is pervading the creation.⁷ The *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* says that *Brahman* is that from which this universe comes out, wherein it stays and to which it goes back.⁸

The popular term for the creator is *Īśvara* (God). The followers of the *Nyāya* school hold that God is the efficient cause of the world and the atoms the material cause. Orthodox *Sāṅkhya* does not admit the existence of God and explains the problem of creation in terms of the natural evolution of *Prakṛti* (matter). *Advaita Vedānta*

holds that Brahman is non-differentiated being and explains creation with reference to the doctrine of super-imposition and illusion.

According to Rāmānuja, God is both the efficient and the material cause of the world. Both conscious souls and unconscious matter qualify Him. It is in matter supervised by God that the process of evolution and dissolution takes place.⁹ The souls and matter are modes (prakāra) of God who is Prakārin. The changes take place in God as prakāra, whereas God as prakārin remains changeless.¹⁰ In the case of the individual souls also the change does not relate to its essence but only means either contraction or expansion of consciousness.¹¹ It is thus that Rāmānuja holds God to be both the efficient and the material cause of the creation.¹²

The view of God as the material cause of the universe, one might object, amounts to holding that the evolutionary change of matter is a change in the essence (svarupa-parināma) of God. This objection Rāmānuja meets with reference to his view that the evolutionary change takes place only in the mode of God, but not in God Himself. While elucidating the relation between the prakāra and the prakārin, the ācārya has conveniently used the terms of śarīra (body) and śarīrin (soul). He then argues that God may be both the efficient and material cause of the world just as a person (śarīrin) is both the efficient and the material cause of the nails and hair growing in him.¹³

God, according to Rāmānuja, unites within Himself the animate and the inanimate beings. All beings from Brahman to a tuft of grass owe their existence to His will. It is under His guidance and supervision that inanimate matter starts, in the beginning of a kalpa, to project this cosmos. It is by His will that the universe revolves. God's will is not, however, the will of a despot, but functions in accordance with the past deeds of the embodied souls.

God wills to be many, so that it is at His will that prakṛti begins to evolve. The primeval stage of matter is technically called 'avyakta' or unmanifest. Of the avyakta is born the 'mahat-tattva.' The 'mahat-tattva' produces 'ahaṅkāra' which is threefold—the sāttvika, rājasa and tūmasa. They are called Vaikārika, Taijasa and Bhutādi respectively. Eleven organs emerge from the sāttvika aspect. They are ear, skin, eyes, tongue (as an organ of taste), nose, tongue (as an organ of speech), hands, feet, anus, the generative organ and mind. The first five are the organs of knowledge, because they enable the soul to know things. The next five are the organs

of action, because it is by means of them that the soul performs actions. The eleventh is the inner sense (*manas* or mind).

Rāmānuja admitted only five kinds of cognitive organs, but Śrinivāsadāsa, a later scholar of Rāmānuja school, added mind to this list and thus admitted six kinds of them.¹⁴ When an individual soul departs, Rāmānuja says, it is accompanied by the mind and the five sense-organs. But he did not subscribe to the view that the conative organs too accompany the departing soul. In this Rāmānuja stands upon the authority of the *Gitā* which clearly states that the departing soul is accompanied by six organs only.¹⁵ But Śrinivāsadāsa held that all the eleven organs accompany the soul at its departure from one body to another.¹⁶ Vāsudeva Śāstri, a commentator on *Yatindramata-dipikā*, has tried to interpret Rāmānuja in the light of Śrinivāsadāsa's view by stating that the action-organs, like the sense organs, accompany the soul at demise.¹⁷ The *Gitā* is indeed in favour of the view that only the six sense-organs accompany the soul when it leaves one body for another, a view which Rāmānuja endorses. But the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* speaks of the departing soul's being accompanied by eleven organs.¹⁸ As regards the number of the organs in a living being, Rāmānuja also mentions it to be eleven.¹⁹ There is a topic in the *Brahmasūtra* on the number of the organs, and both Śankara and Rāmānuja are at one in interpreting it by holding that the organs are eleven and that they are subtle.²⁰

Mind is the eleventh organ. It receives different names according as its functions. It is called 'buddhi' when it decides, 'ahankāra' when it misconceives, and 'citta' when it thinks.²¹ Both Śankara and Rāmānuja agreed on this point.²² Mind is auxiliary to knowledge. A soul knows an object with the help of mind. All the synonyms as well as the different phases of cognition are, therefore, used to denote mind metaphorically or in a secondary sense. The *Veda* says that mind is knowledge (*pra-jñāna*), cognition (*cetas*), and substratum (*dhṛti*) ; and adds that it is the internal, immortal light.²³ It is said to be located in the heart,²⁴ and is regarded as very speedy or rather the speediest of all things.²⁵ It is also pointed out that nothing can be done without its assistance.²⁶ It is difficult to put it under restraint, and it impels people to action through its manifold active phases, just as an adept coach sets in motion the horses through the reins held by him.²⁷

The Process of Evolution of the Gross Elements.

The tāmasa ahankāra produces the tanmātra of sound from which comes ether. Ether produces the tanmātra of touch whence

comes air. Air produces the tanmātra of colour which in its turn produces light. Light produces the tanmātra of taste from which emerges water. Water produces the tanmātra of smell which gives rise to earth.²⁸ This process of evolution is different from that admitted by Sāṅkhya in this that according to the latter the tāmasa ahankāra produces the five tanmātrās which in their turn produce respectively the five elements.²⁹

Tripllication is the work of Para Brahman.

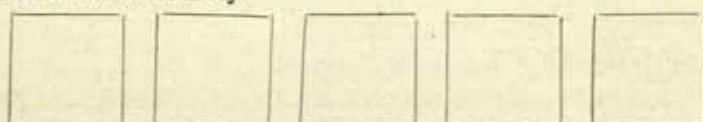
Tripllication (trivṛtkaraṇa) of the elements is not the work of Brahmā, says Rāmānuja. Brahmā is himself born of the cosmic egg which is a conglomeration of triplicated matter. The triplication is, therefore, the work of Para Brahman.³⁰ The Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha equates Brahmā with cosmic mind 'which has imagined the world idea'. 'The Brahmā creates the world through his imaginative activity with the freedom and skill of an artist.'³¹ But, according to Rāmānuja, the cosmic egg is produced by God (Para Brahma) through the triplication of the elements which he brought into existence beforehand. Earth, water and light are unable to produce anything before triplication. It is only after the elements are mixed that they can produce anything. This intermixture is suggestive of quintuplication also,³² according to Yatindramatadipika.³³

The process of Quintuplication.

Venkataṇātha says that having evolved the five elements, God divided each into two parts. He keeps one part intact and divides the other into four. The four sub-divisions of one element are then mixed with one each of the major divisions of the other elements. All the five elements thus intermixed are called quintuplicated (pacificikṛta).³⁴ The following tables will make the process clear :—

FIRST STEP

Elements in their entirety.



SECOND STEP

Elements divided into equal halves



Third Step

One half of each element is kept aside, whereas the second half is sub-divided into four parts.

*Fourth and the final Step*

Four smaller parts of each element are mixed with the greater part of the other four elements. For instance, the first smaller part of ether will go to the greater part of air ; the second smaller part will go to the greater part of light ; the third smaller part will go to the greater part of water ; and the fourth smaller part will go to the greater part of ether. After ether has been divided, air will be divided in the same way. Then the turn of light will come ; then that of air ; and lastly that of earth. Thus the scheme of quintuplication would be complete.

The universe is made up of quintuplicated elements. But then it may be asked : why do we call water water and light light, when they contain certain percentage of other elements also ? The reply is this. In each conglomerated element one particular element predominates ; hence a particular name is given to each.³⁵

Colour in Ether

According to Viśiṣṭādvaita, colour exists in ether too inasmuch as the process of quintuplication puts the element of light into it. The appearance of blue colour in the sky is thus explained.³⁶

Direction not a separate category

Unlike the followers of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, the Viśiṣṭādvaita does not admit Direction (Dik) as a separate category. The latter explains the existence of Dik with reference to ether by stating that it is caused by the movement of the sun.³⁷

Rāmānuja's Rejection of the Atomic Theory

Rāmānuja is opposed to the atomic theory. Gotama and Kaṇāda seem to be silent on the question of the nature of the creation and dissolution of the universe, but later writers belonging to their schools have dealt with this question. They believe in God as the creator of the universe. It is the will of God that sets the atoms on functioning in the beginning. Combination of two atoms results in a diad. Three diads are formed into a 'trasareṇu', and four such trasareṇus are formed into a caturaṇuka, and their further combination results in grosser things of innumerable variety. But Rāmānuja

states that the view of Kapila must be rejected by those who aim at the highest bliss. He says—just as Śaṅkara had done before—that the followers of the Vedic tradition have not accepted the atomic theory of creation.³⁸

A Contrast between Advaita and Visiṣṭādvaita.

According to Advaita, the ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose are produced separately, in an order of succession, from the sattva particles of ether, air, fire, water and earth.³⁹ The combined sattva particulars of the elements produce intellect and mind.⁴⁰ The organs of speech, the hands, the feet and the organs of evacuation and generation are produced separately, in an order of succession, from the rajas particulars of ether, air, fire, water and earth.⁴¹ The combined rajas particles of the elements produce the five vital airs.⁴² This process differs very much from that of Visiṣṭādvaita, as will be clear from the following tables :—

COSMOLOGY ACCORDING TO ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

BRAHMAN			Compounded		
			Air	Fire	Water
Five Elements			Or rather :—		Earth
			Ether	Ether	
Uncompounded					
Sattva Aspect			Rajasa Aspect		
(Separately)			(Combined)		
Ears	Skin	Eyes	Tongue	Nose	Mind
(Separately) plus			(Combined)		
Organ of Hands	Feet	Organ of	Organ of		
Speech		evacuation	generation	Prāṇa	Apāna
				Samāna	Udāna
				Vyāna	

*COSMOLOGY ACCORDING TO SANKHYA SYSTEM

MATTER	Sattvika Aspect							Tamas Aspect							
	Ears	Skin	Eyes	Tongue	Nose	Organ of speech	Hands	Feet	Organ of evacuation	Mind	Sound	Touch	Sight	Taste	Smell
INTELLECT															
EGO															

*According to Sankhya-karikas.

†COSMOLOGY ACCORDING TO VISISTADVAITA

Satvika Aspect							Tāmasa Aspect				
Ears	Skin	Eyes	Tongue	Nose	Organ of speech	Hands	Feet	Organ of evacuation	Organ of generation	Mind	Sound-tanmātra
MATTER											
INTELLECT											
EGO											

†According to Yatindra-mata-dipikā.

Rāmānuja's difference from Sāṅkhya View

According to Rāmānuja, matter evolves under the supervision of God, whereas the Sāṅkhya does not postulate His existence. Even a theist should not hold, a follower of Sāṅkhya would argue, that nature evolves under God's supervision, because God is regarded by the scriptures as incapable of any action.⁴³ If the supervisor is a propeller, a question would arise : 'Is God a propeller of matter through His own activity or simply by His proximity ? The first alternative cannot hold good, for there is no activity in God, as the follower of Sāṅkhya would urge. The second alternative too, is, according to Sāṅkhya, equally unsound, for in that case even a donkey, for example, may be regarded as a propeller in the case of the origin of a pitcher. The adherent to Sāṅkhya, therefore, holds that just as a cow's or a mother's milk flows on, by itself, for the sake of a calf or a child ; similarly unconscious matter unfolds itself without external influence, for the emancipation of the *puruṣas*.⁴⁴ To this Rāmānuja objects that no non-intelligent thing can produce an effect in the absence of an intelligent guiding agent. Wood for instance cannot form itself into the shape of a house or a conveyance without the agency of a carpenter.⁴⁵ Although some instances may be shown where the non-intelligent matter seems at first sight to work of itself, yet a deeper insight would reveal the controlling influence of an intelligent principle.⁴⁶ In cases such as water coming down from the clouds, one may indeed say that non-intelligent water works of itself; but such a statement would be wrong, because, as Rāmānuja reminds, the scriptures teach us that God indwells and controls water and so on.

The 'Why' of Creation.

Just as an individual creates dreams to fulfil his wishes, similarly, according to the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, the Cosmic Mind creates the objective world to fulfil Its will, for 'the law of evolution of rise of an objective world is the same in the case of a dream.....or of the rise of a cosmos !'⁴⁷ The existence of cosmos is ascribed by *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha* to the creative activity of *Brahmā*; but 'the rise of *Brahmā* in the ocean of *Brahman*' has been stated to be the most mysterious fact.⁴⁸

The *Rgveda* reveals that God created the world as it had been before.⁴⁹ Bādarāyaṇa favours the view and maintains that the names and forms of this world are the same as in the previous creation.⁵⁰ According to Rāmānuja, the Supreme Person remembers, at the termination of dissolution, the constitution of the preceding universe, wills

to become manifold and creates the world.⁵¹ The process of creation and dissolution goes on repeating itself Kalpa after Kalpa. There is no end of this cycle. He is the Lord of all, yet he has engaged Himself in the work of creation. The motive which prompts Him is nothing but sport (līlā)⁵². He fashions the universe by His mere will. He is busy in the affairs of the world just as a great ruler arranges a game at balls simply for his amusement. The creation is manifold. There are beings of various types—high, middle and low. But God is not open to the charge of cruelty and partiality, Rāmānuja says, because inequality of creation depends upon the deeds of individual souls.⁵³ On this point there is agreement between Śāṅkara and Rāmānuja.⁵⁴

References

1. कि स्वदासीदविष्ठानमारम्भणं कर्तमत् स्वित्कथासीत्
यतो भूमि जनयन् विश्वकर्मा वि द्यामोणोन्महिना विश्वचक्षा: । (ऋग्वेदः १०. ८१. ४)
किस्तिवद्वनं क उ स वृक्ष आस यो द्यावापुष्पिवी निष्टतक्षुः
मनीषिणो मनसा पृच्छतेदु तद् यदाध्यतिष्ठद् भुवनानि धारयन् (पूर्वोक्तम् १०. ८१. ४)
2. को अद्वा वेद क इह प्रवोचत् ।
कुत आजाता कुत इयं विसृष्टिः ॥
प्रवामदेवा अस्य विसर्जनेना—
या को वेद यत आवभूव ॥ (पूर्वोक्तम् १०. १२६. ६.)
इयं विसृष्टिर्यंत आवभूव,
यदि वा दधे यदि वा न ।
यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन्
त्सो अंग वेद यदि वा न वेद । (पूर्वोक्तम् १०. १२६. ७)
3. विश्वतत्त्वक्षुरुत विश्वतोमुखो विश्वतोवाहुरुत विश्वतस्पात् ।
सं वाहुभ्यां धर्मति सं पतञ्चर्यावाभूमी जनयन्देव एकः ॥ (पूर्वोक्तम् १०. ८१. ३)
4. त्रिष्य एव तु वेदेभ्यः पादं पादमद्वृहत् ।
तदित्यूचोस्याः सावित्र्याः परमेष्ठी प्रजापतिः (मनुस्मृति २. ७७)
5. द्यावाभूमी जनयन्देव एकः (इवेताइवतर ३. ३)
6. ततो विराङ्गायत (यजुर्वेद ३१. ५)
7. स्कन्दमो दावार द्यावापुष्पिवी उभे इमे

स्कम्भो दधारो वैन्तरिक्षम्

स्कम्भो दधार प्रदिशः षड्बीः

स्कम्भ इदं विश्वं भूवनमाविवेश (अथवैवेद १०. ७. ३५)

8. यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते येन जातानि जीवन्ति यत् प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति तद् विजिज्ञासस्व तद् ब्रह्म । (तैत्ति० ३. १)

9. मदीया प्रकृतिः सत्यसंकल्पेन मयाध्यक्षेणेक्षिता सच्चराचरं जगत्सूयते ।

(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ६. १०)

10. अतः प्रकृतिप्रकार-संस्थिते परमात्मनि प्रकारभूतप्रकृत्यंशे विकारः ।

प्रकार्यंशे चाविकारः । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः)

11. (अ) एवमध्युपगच्छतामस्माकमात्मधर्मेभूतस्य चैतन्यस्य स्वाभाविकस्यापि कर्मणा पारमार्थिकं संकोचं विकासं च ब्रह्मताम् (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् ७३)

(ब) ज्ञानानन्दादिगुणानां कर्मणात्मनि संकुचितानां परं ज्योतिर्हपसंपद्य कर्मरूपबन्धक्षये विकाससूपाविर्भवो वा नानुपपनः (श्रीभाष्यम् ४. ४. ३)

12. न निमित्तकारणमात्रं ब्रह्म, उपादानकारणं च ब्रह्मैव । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. ४. २१)

13. Mm. Gaurīśāṅkara Hirācanda Ojhā in his book 'Madhyakalīna Bhāratīya Saṃskṛti' has erroneously attributed to Rāmānuja the view that God is only the efficient cause of the universe, while the jīvas are its material cause (vide page 97 of his book).

14. ज्ञान-प्रसरणशक्तमिन्द्रियं ज्ञानेन्द्रियम् । तत्पोदा मनःशोत्रचक्षुद्वाराणुरसनात्मवर्भेदात् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ४)

15. मर्मवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।

मनः-षष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्यति (गीता १५. ७)

जीवभूतस्त्वसंकुचित-ज्ञानैश्वर्यः कर्मलब्ध-प्रकृतिपरिणामविशेषरूप-शरीरस्थानामिन्द्रियाणां मनः-षष्ठानामीश्वरस्तानि कर्मनुग्रहमितस्ततः कर्यति (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १५. ७)

न सप्तवेन्द्रियाणि अपि तु एकादशा.....भूनव्यपदेशास्तु तत्र-तत्र विवक्षित-गमनादिकार्यविशेषप्रयुक्ताः (श्रीभा० २. ४. ५)

कर्मनिंद्रियाणि जीवेन साकं न गच्छन्ति । (वेदान्तदीप-प्रकाश)

16. परकायप्रवेशे लोकान्तरगमनादिषु च जीवेन सह गमनमिन्द्रियाणाम् । कर्मनिंद्रियाणां शरीरनाशान्नाशा इति पक्षस्तु भाष्याविरोधेन नेयः । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ४)

17. अतएव भाष्ये सप्तगत्यविकरणे हस्तादीनां जीवेन सह गमनाभावादनिन्द्रियत्वं सिद्धान्तितम् । हस्तादीनि कर्मनिंद्रियाण्यपि जीवेन साकं गच्छन्तयेव न तु विनश्यन्तीति तदाशयः (प्रकाश-टीका, पृष्ठ ३६)

18. (बृहदारण्यकम् ३. ६. ४)

19. न सप्तवेन्द्रियाण्यपित्वेकादश, हस्तादीनामपि शरीरस्थिते जीवे तस्य भोगोपकरणत्वात् कार्यभेदाच्च । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४. ४. ५)

20. (अ) उत्क्रान्त्यादिषु पाशंस्यै रनुपलभ्यमानत्वादगणवश्व प्राणाः ।
 (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ४. ६)
 (ब) तस्मादेकादशैव प्राणाः शब्दतः कायंतद्येति तिद्धम् (२. ४. ६. ब्रह्मसूत्रे
 शांकरभाष्यम्)
 (स) तस्मात्सूक्ष्माः परिच्छिन्नादच प्राणा इत्यध्यवस्थामः (२. ४. ७. ब्रह्मसूत्रे
 शांकरभाष्यम्)

21. अध्यवसायाभिमान-चिन्ता-वृत्तिभेदान्मन एव बुद्ध्यहंकारचित्तशब्दैव्यं पदिश्यते ।
 (श्रीभाष्यम् २०. ४. ५)

22. सर्वार्थविषयं वैकाल्यवृत्ति मनस्त्वेकमनेकवृत्तिकम् । तदेव वृत्तिभेदात् वचिद्
 भिन्नत्वद् अपदिश्यते । मनो बुद्धिरहंकारशिवतं चेति ।
 (२. ४. ६. ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम्)

23. यत्प्रज्ञानमुत चेतो वृत्तिश्च यज्जयोतिरन्तरमूतं प्रजासु (यज्ञेदः ३. ४. ३)
 24. हृतप्रतिष्ठम् । (पूर्वोक्तम् ३४. ६)
 25. जविष्ठम् (पूर्वोक्तम्)
 26. यस्मान्म ऋते किंचन कमं कियते (पूर्वोक्तम् ३४. ३)
 27. सुवारशिरश्वानिव यन्मनुष्यान्मेनीयते भीषु भिर्वाजिन इव । (पूर्वोक्तम् ३४. ६)
 28. राजसाहंकार-सहकृताद् भूतादिसंजकतामसाहंकाराच्छब्दादिपंच-तन्मात्राभ्या-
 काशादि-यंच महाभूतानि चोत्पवन्ते इत्यादि । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ४)
 भूतादिस्तु विकुर्वाणः शब्दतन्मात्रकं ततः ।
 ससर्जं, शब्दतन्मात्रादाकाशं शब्दलक्षणम् ।
 शब्दमात्रं तथाकाशं भूतादिः स समावृणोत ।
 याकाशस्तु विकुर्वाणः स्पर्शमात्रं ससर्जं ह ॥
 वलवानभवद् वायुस्तस्य स्पर्शो गुणो मतः ।
 ग्राकाशं शब्दमात्रं तु स्पर्शमात्रं समावृणोत् ॥
 इत्यादि (श्रीविष्णुपुराणम् १. २. ३७)

29.पंचभ्यः पंचभूतानि (सांख्यकारिका २२)
 तस्मादपि योद्यकादपकृष्टेभ्यः पंचभ्यस्तन्मात्रेभ्यः पंचभूतान्याकाशादीनि ।
 तत्र शब्दतन्मात्रादाकाशं शब्दगुणम् । शब्दतन्मात्रसहितात् स्पर्शमात्राद् वायुः
 शब्दस्पर्शगुणं इत्यादि । (उक्त-कारिकायां तत्त्वकीमुदी)

30. त्रिवृत्करणं चतुर्मुखस्याण्डान्तवृत्तिनो न सम्भवति, त्रिवृत्कृतैस्तेजोबन्धेन्द्रहाण्ड-
 मुत्पद्यते ।
 चतुर्मुखस्य चाण्डे सम्भवः स्मयते तस्मिन्नण्डेभवद् ब्रह्मा सर्वलोक-पिता। महः इति ।
 अतस्मिन्वृत्करणं परस्यैव ब्रह्मणस्तस्मानकर्तुं कं नामरूपव्याकरणं च तस्यैव
 विज्ञायते । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ४. १७)

31. The Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha and Its Philosophy (page 71).

32. वेदे त्रिवृत्करणोपदेशस्तु पंचीकरणस्याप्युपलक्षणम् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ४)

33. (अ) पंचीकरणं सप्तीकरणं च पुराणप्रसिद्धम् । (सिद्धान्तसिद्धांजनम् पृष्ठ ४३)
 (ब) इत्यं च सप्तीकरणीकदेशः पंचीकरणं तदेकदेशस्त्रिवृत्करणमिति न परस्पर-
 विरोधः (पूर्वोक्तम् पृष्ठ ४५)
 (स) इत्यं पंचीकृतैः सप्तीकृतैर्वा तत्त्वैरण्डाधारम्भो देहाद्युत्पत्तिश्च (पूर्वोक्तम्)

34. द्वे धा भूतानि भित्वा पुनरपि च भिन्नत्यद्वं मेकं चतुर्धा, तेरेकैकस्य भागं
 परमनुकलयत्यद्वं मद्वं चतुर्भिः, इत्यं पंचीकृतैस्तैर्जनयति स जगद्वेतुरण्डादिकार्य-
 ष्टैदम्पर्यं त्रिवृत्वश्चुतिरधिकगिरामक्षमेका निरोद्धम् । (तत्त्वमुक्ताकलापः
 १. १७)

35. वैशेष्यात् तदादस्तद्वादः (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् २. ४. १६)

36. नीलं न भ इति प्रतीतेः पंचीकरणप्रक्रियया रूपवांश्च । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ४)

37. सूर्य-परिस्पन्दादिभिराकाशस्यैव प्राच्यादिव्यवहारोपपत्तो न पृथग् द्रव्यकल्पनम् ।
 (पूर्वोक्तम्)

38. (अ) कापिलरक्षस्य श्रुतिन्यायविरोध-परित्यक्तस्यापि सत्कायं वादादिना क्वचिदंशे
 वेदिकैः परिग्रहोऽस्ति, अस्य तु काणादपक्षस्य केनाव्यंशेनापरिग्रहादनुपपन्न
 त्वाच्चात्यन्तमनपेक्षेव निःश्रेयसाचिभिः कार्या ।
 (श्रीभाष्यम् २. २. १६)

(ब) अवं तु परमाणु-कारण-वादो न कैश्चिदपि शिष्टैः केनचिदव्यंशेन परिगृहीत
 इत्यत्यन्तमेवानादरणीयो वेदवादिभिः ॥ (२. २. १७) ब्रह्मसूत्रे
 षांकरभाष्यम् ।

39. एतान्याकाशादीनां सात्त्विकांशेभ्यो व्यस्तेभ्यः पृथक्-पृथक् क्रमेणोत्पद्यन्ते
 (वेदान्तसार ६४०)

40. एते पुनराकाशादिगत-सात्त्विकांशेभ्यो मिलितेभ्य उत्पद्यन्ते (पूर्वोक्तम् ७०)

41. एतानि (कर्मेन्द्रियाणि) पुनराकाशादीनां रजोंशेभ्यो व्यस्तेभ्यः पृथक्-पृथक्
 क्रमेणोत्पद्यन्ते । (वेदान्तसार ७६)

42. एतत्प्राणादि-पंचकमाकाशादिगत-रजोंशेभ्यो मिलितेभ्य उत्पद्यते ।
 (पूर्वोक्तम् ८७)

43. आरभ्यत इति आरम्भः सर्गो महदादिभूतः प्रकृत्यैव कृतो नेश्वरेण... नेश्वराधि-
 ठित-प्रकृतिकृतो निवृपितरस्याधिष्ठातृत्वासम्भवात् । (सांख्यकारिका ५६
 तत्त्वकीमुदी)

44. वत्सविवृद्धिनिमितं क्षीरस्य यथा प्रवृत्तिरजस्य, पुरुषविमोक्षनिमित्तं क्षीरस्य तथा
 प्रवृत्तिः प्रधानस्य । (सांख्यकारिका ५०)

45. दावदिरचेतनस्य तज्ज्ञानधिष्ठितस्य कार्यारम्भानुपपत्तेदेशंनात् तज्ज्ञानधिष्ठितस्य
 कार्यारम्भप्रवृत्तेदेशंनाच्च न प्राज्ञानधिष्ठितं प्रधानं कारणं (श्रीभाष्यम् २. २. १)

46. यत् क्षीरजलादि दृष्टान्तया निर्दिग्दं तत्रापि प्राज्ञानधिष्ठाने प्रवृत्तिर्नोपपत्तते
 योप्यु तिष्ठन्त्यादिश्रुतेः । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. २. २)

47. Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha and Its Philosophy (page 62).

48. *Ibid* (page 72).

49. भाता यथापूर्वं मकल्पयत् (ऋग्वेदः १०. १६०. ३)

50. समाननाम-रूपत्वाच्चावृत्तावप्यविरोधो दर्शनात् स्मृतेऽच । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् १. ३. २६)

51. स भगवान् पुरुषोत्तमः प्रलयावसानसमये पूर्वं संस्थानं जगत् स्मरन् बहुः स्यामिति संकल्प्य.....महदादि-ब्रह्माण्डं हिरण्यगर्भं पर्यन्तं यथा पूर्वं स्मृत्वा (श्रीभाष्यम् १. ३. २)

52. अवाप्तसप्तस्तुकामस्य परिपूर्णस्य.....सर्वे लीलैव प्रयोजननम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. १. ३३)

53. सूज्यमान-देवादिक्षेत्रज्ञ-कर्मसापेक्षत्वाद्विषमसृष्टेः । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. १. ३४)

54. सापेक्षो हीश्वरो विषमां सृष्टिं निर्मितीते । किमपेक्षत इति चेद् धर्माधिमविपेक्षत इति वदामः अतः सूज्यमान प्राणिधर्माधिमपेक्षा विषमा सृष्टिरिति नायमीश्वरस्यापराधः । (२. १. ३४ ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम्)

III Ethics

Action, knowledge and devotion—Disinterestedness and equanimity—No forbidden action is to be done—Renunciation of acts springing out of desire—Action necessary at all stages of life—knowledge—Devotion—Śaṅkara on actions—The four kinds of action—Yajña etc. are not to be relinquished—permission to eat prohibited food only for self-preservation—Assumption of a child's attitude—faithful discharge of duties is worship of God.

When a man comes to know that worldly pleasures are but transitory and mixed with pain, he loses interest in them, and tries to have a different form of pleasure from a higher plane, specially divine ; and with a view to attaining it, he has recourse to the various sacrificial rites ordained in the *Vedas*¹. These elaborate rites, it is believed, lead the soul to the paradise of Indra, the abode of pleasures. These pleasures are undoubtedly superior to those of this world, but they are also transitory. For one is bound to return from Indra's paradise.² A wise man is therefore not inclined towards such rituals which are the causes of re-birth.

The scriptures have suggested three means of attaining salvation—action, knowledge and devotion. For Rāmānuja, the last is the principal one ; and the former two, its auxiliaries.

The essence of the theory of action as taught in the *Gita* is that whatever action a man performs should be performed disinterestedly i. e., without aiming at the consequences.³ Duty is to be done for duty's sake, and not for the sake of any reward to be had here or hereafter. All actions have their appropriate consequences, but wise are those who are neither puffed up at their success, nor dejected at their failure.⁴ One who can receive success and failure with equanimity is a man of right action.⁵ It is not for us to look forward to the result ; we are only to work, regardless of consequences. No forbidden action is to be undertaken, because it makes the mind impure. Acts springing out of desire (*kāmya karma*) are to be renounced ;⁶ but sacrifices, charity and austerity are not to be relinquished.⁷ They are to be performed so long as the body persists.⁸ It is a wrong idea that man can attain salvation by giving up all actions. Action

is necessary at all stages of life. Without action life would not be worth living. An action performed in obedience to God will not produce bondage. On the contrary, such an action will please God,⁹ and produce perfection for the agent.

Knowledge consists in the correct understanding of the difference between the body and the soul.¹⁰ The body is an effect of prakṛti which is always changing, whereas the soul (puruṣa) is changeless. Both prakṛti and puruṣa are without beginning.¹¹ The soul enlivens the body just as the sun illuminates the world.¹² The three guṇas—sattva, rajas and tamas—constitute prakṛti ; hence they belong to the physical side and not to the spiritual. When the soul rises above the influence of these three guṇas, it enjoys immortality. A man who follows the path of knowledge is never disturbed by outward happenings. For him, pleasure and pain are alike. He does not aspire after praise, nor does he dread censure. He does not care for honour or dishonour, because he is firmly established within himself.

Devotion is saturated through and through with love. Every man has a desire to love and to be loved. This inborn inclination towards love results in limited pleasure. But if it is directed to the Supreme Being, it results in unlimited and endless happiness. God is to be loved as a father, a mother, a friend or a lord. He responds in an appropriate manner to whatever relation man establishes with HIM.¹³ The love that changes with changing circumstances is not true love, but selfishness. In true love there is no expectation of any reward.¹⁴ The true devotee cannot but love the lord. Those who love worldly things and the Lord simultaneously are persons whose love is only partial. Even such partial love is, however, better than no love. But when compared with pure, divine love, it pales into insignificance. God is Himself love concrete. He cannot ignore the devotion of a devotee. He welcomes even such an humble thing as a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water offered with devotion. The invisible God reveals His glorious, divine form to the devotee in all mercy, and grants him fellowship in His celestial abode from where there is no return to this world of misery.¹⁵

According to Advaita Vedānta, action primarily purifies the mind, and devotion contributes to its concentration.¹⁶ Secondarily, their result is the attainment of Pitṛloka and Satyaloka respectively.¹⁷ But the veil of ignorance is removed only by true knowledge. Salvation, as Advaita Vedānta holds, can therefore be attained only through knowledge and not through action and devotion. The 'prog-

ressive release' (Krama-mukti) which a devotee attains is not the final aim of the scriptures. It is merely a stage preparatory to the final identification of the individual with Brahman. At the dawn of true knowledge, a devotee attains salvation along with his deity viz. Hiranyagarbha.¹⁸ The Krama-mukti resulting from devotion to the lower Brahman is thus only subsidiary, whereas the 'quick release' (sadyo-mukti) consequent upon the knowledge of higher Brahman is primary. Devotion cannot then lead to salvation in the strictest sense. Similarly, as Advaita holds, action can only help an aspirant in purifying his mind, but cannot be a direct means to his emancipation. The scriptures have prescribed action, according to Śankara, only for those who are still labouring under ignorance (avidya).¹⁹ Actions are to be performed only until true knowledge dawns. They have no value for a man of knowledge just as the digging of a well has no value for a man who finds himself in the midst of a deluge.²⁰ A man desirous of an empire does not make any effort to obtain a farm.²¹ The various actions viz those that are to be performed every day, those that are accidental and those that are desired are for a man of knowledge as futile as the prohibited ones.²² The absolute cessation of transmigration (samsāra) is possible only in sannyāsa which means renunciation of all actions.²³ Knowledge alone is conducive to real happiness. Even knowledge in connection with action (jñāna-karma-samuccaya) is of no avail with regard to the attainment of final liberation.²⁴ The alternative view on sannyāsa and tyāga and the preference for karma-yoga as expressed in the Gītā holds good, according to Śankara, only in the case of those who tread the path of action and not those who have chosen the way of knowledge.²⁵ Not only those who follow the path of action, but also those who devote themselves to the task of placating God are said, according to Śankara, to be living in the darkness of avidyā.²⁶

Rāmānuja however differs from Śankara. According to him, action promotes devotion, and so it should be performed even by a man of knowledge so long as he is alive.²⁷ For a man who is qualified to pursue jñāna-yoga, Rāmānuja says, karma-yoga has superior advantage over jñāna-yoga, because the former is easy to perform. One is to perform actions till the goal is not reached—salvation is not attained.

Badarāyaṇa held that the highest benefit (puruṣārtha) accrues to a person from vidyā and not from action.²⁸ Rāmānuja has the same view, and while commenting upon Brahma-sūtra 3.4.1. quotes from the Upaniṣads such passages as 'A man of knowledge reaches

the Highest.²⁹ But he holds that Bādarāyaṇa only expresses here his difference from Jaimini who held that a man is most benefitted by action.³⁰ And he Adds that the word 'Vidyā' used by Bādarāyaṇa means meditation upon, and devotion to, God.³¹

On the view of Rāmānuja, knowledge is only a means of redemption, so that it requires the co-operation of different kinds of action. He compared knowledge to a horse which, though a means of conveyance for his master, requires attendants, grooming etc. The horse will, of course, carry its rider, but a smooth riding requires certain actions on the part of the rider.³² Action is manifold—the daily (nitya), the accidental (naimittika), the desired (kāmya) and the prohibited (pratiṣiddha). That a man of piety should eschew what is prohibited by the scriptures e.g. stealing and lying goes without saying. Again, such a man has, really, no liking for them ; he also gives up those actions whose origin lies in desires. To give up such actions is called renunciation which is an essential characteristic of the religious aspirant.³³ The daily duties, however, such as ablution and oblation and the accidental ones such as bath at the time of lunar and solar eclipses are to be performed. The sacrifices, alms-giving and austerities tend to purify man and hence they are not to be relinquished.³⁴ One should cultivate the habit of remaining calm, subdued, satisfied, patient and collected.³⁵

It may not be out of place to note that Rāmānuja agrees with Bādarāyaṇa in putting no restriction on food to be taken by the religious aspirant. A man of wisdom, according to him, may eat even prohibited food, but he may do so provided that such food is absolutely needed for his self-preservation.³⁶ The ācārya has mentioned the case of Uṣasti, a prominent theologian, who ate prohibited food to save himself from the ravages of a famine, but who eventually refrained from drinking prohibited water when the right kind of water was available elsewhere.

Rāmānuja holds that the duties relating to various āśramas also are to be discharged by a man of wisdom,³⁷ because karma contributes to vidyā. In this respect he differs from Śāṅkara who affirms that there is no necessity of karma for a man of knowledge.

If rightly done, action is not detrimental to final beatitude. Not only the daily and the accidental actions but also the desired ones can procure emancipation, provided the agent surrenders his agency to the divinity.³⁸ Such actions as the construction of temples, laying out flower-gardens, sweeping sacred places, plucking and gathering

flowers for the worship of God procure perfection for the agent ; and by perfection Rāmānuja means communion with God.³⁹

Learning is good, but no unnecessary stress is to be laid upon it. It is to be given up at some stage or another, and the attitude of a child is to be assumed, says Rāmānuja in agreement with some of the teachings of the Upaniṣads and Bādarāyana. But what is the nature of a child's attitude ? Rāmānuja replies that it is an attitude devoid of pride and arrogance. It is however only the absence of pride etc. that should be aimed at by an aspirant and not the child's wilful behaviour which is prohibited by the scriptures.⁴⁰ Control of speech is another special feature of the life of a man of knowledge or devotion, who is accordingly called a muni.⁴¹

All these actions are auxiliaries to the religious way of life in more or less the same sense as are the duties pertaining to the ḍāshamas. The Lord has said that faithful discharge of one's own duties is itself the worship of God.⁴²

References

- १ वैविद्यास्तु...स्वर्गंति प्रार्थयन्ते । ते पुरुषं दुःखासम्भिनं सुरेन्द्र-लोकं प्राप्य तत्र दिव्यान् देवभोगानशनन्ति । (रामानुजस्य गीता-भाष्यम् द. २०)
- २ अल्पास्थिर-स्वर्गादीननुभूय पुनः पुनः निवत्तन्ते । रा० गीता-भाष्यम् द. २१)
- ३ तस्मादसत्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर । (गीता ३. १६)
- ४ विजयादि-सिद्धिसिद्धिः समो भूत्वा कुरु (रा० गीता-भाष्यम् २. ४८)
- ५ मुखदुःखार्थंलाभालाभ-जय-पराजयेषु अविकृतवृद्धिः स्वर्गादि-फलाभिसन्धिरहितः केवल-कार्यंयुदया युद्धमारभस्व । (रा० गीता-भाष्यम् २. ३८)
६. काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयो विदुः, सर्वं-कर्मं-फलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः । (गीता १८. २)
७. यज्ञदान-तपः-प्रभूति वैदिकं कर्मं मुमुक्षुणा न कदाचिदपि त्याज्यं । अपितु आप्रायणादहरहः कार्यमेव । (गीता-भाष्यम् १८. ५)
८. यावदात्मावलोकन-रूपमोक्षप्राप्तिस्तावत्कर्मं कार्यम् (गीता-भाष्यम् ६. ३)
९. (अ) परमपुरुषप्रीत्येकफलनित्यनैमित्तकं कर्मं (रा० गीता-भाष्यम् १८. १३) (आ) यज्ञादिभिः कर्मभिराराधितः परमपुरुषोऽस्य (२० गीता-भाष्यम् ३. ६)
१०. क्षेत्र-क्षेत्रज्ञयोज्ञानं यत्तज्ञानं मतं मम । (गीता १३. २)
११. प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्ययनादी उभावपि । (गीता १३. १६)
१२. (अ) यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः

क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृस्तं प्रकाशयति भारत । (गीता १३. ३३)
 (आ) प्रकाशयाल्लोकात्प्रकाशकादित्यवद् वेदितृत्वेन वेदाभूतादस्मात् क्षेत्रा-
 दत्यन्तविलक्षणोऽयमुक्त-लक्षणं आत्मा । (गीतायां १३. ३३ रामानुज-भाष्यम्)

13. ये भृत्याश्रवणापेक्षा यथा येन प्रकारेण स्वापेक्षानुरूपं मां संकल्प्य प्रपद्यन्ते
 समाध्यन्ते तान्त्रिति तथैव तन्मनीषित-प्रकारेण भजामि मां दर्शयामि । (रा० गी० भा० ४. ११)

14. यस्त आशिष आशास्ते न स भूत्यः स वै वर्णिक् ॥ (भागवतम् ७, १०, ४)

15. (अ) मां प्राप्य पुनर्निखिल-दुःखालय-मस्थिरं जन्म न प्राप्नुवन्ति यत एते
 महात्मानोऽमदाश्रया मामुपास्य परम-संसिद्धिरूपं मां प्राप्ताः । (रा० गीता-भाष्यम् ८. १५)
 (आ) मां सर्वं सत्यसंकल्पं निखिल-जगदुत्पत्तिस्थितिलयलीलं परमकारणिकं
 सदैकरसं प्राप्तानां विनाश-प्रसंगाभावात् । तेषां पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते । (रा० गीता-भाष्यम् ८. १६)

(इ) यथा……परम कारणिको निरस्तसमस्तसमाध्यधिक-सम्भावनः पर-
 ब्रह्माभिधानः परम-पुरुषोऽस्तीति शब्दादवगम्यते……एवं स्वया-
 धात्मयानुभवरूपानविकातिशयानन्दं प्राप्य पुनर्निर्वितंयतीत्यपि
 शब्दादेवावगम्यते । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४. ४. २१)

16. एतेषां नित्यादीनां दुद्विशुद्धिः परं प्रयोजनमुपासनानां तु चित्तकाग्र्यम्
 (वेदान्तसारः १३)

17. नित्य-नैमित्तिकयोहपासनानां त्ववान्तरफलं पितॄलोक-सत्यलोक-प्राप्तिः ।
 (वेदान्तसारः १३)

18. कार्यब्रह्मलोकप्रलयप्रत्युपस्थाने सति तत्रैवोत्पन्न-सम्यग्दर्शनाः सन्तस्तदध्यक्षेण
 हिरण्यगर्भेण सहातः परं परिशुद्धं विष्णोः परमं पदं प्रतिपद्यन्ते । इत्यं
 क्रममुक्तिरनावृत्यादिश्रुत्यभिधानेभ्योऽभ्युपगम्तव्या । (शांकर-भाष्यं ब्रह्मसूत्रे ४. ३. १०)

19. अविद्वद्विषयं कर्म, विद्वद्विषया च सर्वकर्मसंन्यासपूर्विका ज्ञान-निष्ठा ।
 (गीतायां शांकर-भाष्यं, पृष्ठ ४५५)

20. केवल्यफले हि जाने प्राप्ते सर्वतः संप्लूतोदके फले कूपताणामादिक्रिया-
 कलाधित्वाभाववत् फलान्तरे तत्साधनभूतायां वा क्रियायामधित्वानुपपत्तिः ।
 (गीतायां शांकर-भाष्यम्, पृष्ठ ४४८)

21. न हि राज्यप्राप्ति-फले कर्मणि व्यापृतस्य क्षेत्रप्राप्तिफले व्यापारोपपत्तिस्तद्विषयं
 चार्यित्वम् । (पूर्वोक्तम्)

22. यथा प्रतिषेधशास्त्रावगतमपि ब्रह्महृत्यादि-लक्षणं कर्मान्यकारणमविद्याकामा-
 दिदोषवतो भवत्यन्ययाप्रवृत्यनुपत्तेस्तथा नित्य नैमित्तिककाम्यान्यपि ।
 (पूर्वोक्तम्, ४५६, ७)

23. ततश्च सर्वं-कर्मसंन्यासाज्ञान-निष्ठायामात्यन्तिकः संसारोपरमः ।
(पूर्वोक्तम्, पृष्ठ ४५६)

24. (ग्र) तस्मान् कर्मणोऽस्ति निःश्रेयससाधनत्वं न च ज्ञानकर्मणोः समुच्चितयोः
(पूर्वोक्तम्, पृष्ठ ४४६)

(प्रा) न ज्ञाननिष्ठा कर्म-सहितोपपद्यते । (पूर्वोक्तम् पृष्ठ ४४६)

25. कर्मण एवाधिकृतानपेक्ष्यैते विकल्पा न ज्ञाननिष्ठान् व्युत्थायिनः संन्यासिनो-
प्रेक्ष्य । (गीतायां शांकरभाष्यम् १८. ३.)

26. भगवत्कर्मकारिणो ये युक्ततमा अपि कर्मणोऽज्ञाः
(गीतायां शांकर-भाष्यम् १८. ६६)

27. ज्ञाननिष्ठस्यापि ध्रियमाण-शरीरस्य यावत्साधन-समाप्तिं महायज्ञादि नित्यने-
मितिकं कर्मविश्वं कायम् । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ३. ८.)

28. पुरुषार्थोऽतः शब्दादिति बादरायणः । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ३. ४. १)

29. ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम् । (तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत् २. १. १)

30. (ग्र) शेषत्वात् पुरुषार्थवादो यथान्येष्विति जीमिनिः (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ३. ४. २)
(ग्रा) कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समा इत्यात्मविदः पुरुषायुषस्य सर्वस्य
कर्मसु नियमेन विनियोगात् कर्मण एव फलमित्यवगम्यते विद्या तु
कर्मांगम् । (श्री-भाष्यम् ३. ४. ७)

31. ध्यानोपासन-पर्यायेण वेदन-शब्देनोपदेशात् । (श्री-भाष्यम् ४. १. १)

32. यथा पुरुषगमन-साधनभूतोऽश्वः स्वपरिकरबन्धपरिकमपिक्षा एवं मोक्षसाधनभूतोऽपि
विद्या नित्यनैमित्तिक-कर्मपरिकरापेक्षा । (श्री-भाष्यम् ३. ४. २)

33. कर्मजन्मं स्वर्गादिकं फलं मम न स्यादिति फलत्यागः ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् २८. ४)

34. यजदानतपः-प्रभूति वेदिकं कर्म मुमुक्षुणा न कदाचिदपि त्याज्यमपित्वाप्रायणा-
दहरहः कायमेव । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १८. ५)

35. (ग्र) शमदमाद्युपेतः स्यात् । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ३. ४. २७) ।
(प्रा) तस्मादेवंविच्छान्तो दान्तं उपरतस्तितिक्षुः समाहितः ।
(बृहदारण्यक ३. ४. २३)

36. (ग्र) सर्वान्नानुमितिश्च प्राणात्यये तद्वान्नात् । (बृ० सू० ३. ४. २८) ।
(प्रा) दृश्यते ह्यन्यत्र ब्रह्मविदामपि प्राणात्ययापत्तावेव सर्वान्नाभ्यनुज्ञा ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् ३. ४. २८)
(श्रीभाष्यम् ३. ४. २८)

37. आश्रमस्य कर्मापि भवति...कुतः, यावज्जीवमग्निहोत्रं जुहोतीत्यादिना विहित-
त्वाज्जीवन-निमित्ततया नित्यवद् विहितत्वादित्यर्थः । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. ४. १२)

38. न केवलं नित्यनैमित्तिककर्मण्यपितु काम्यान्यपि सर्वाणि कर्माणि मद्-व्यपाश्रयो

मयि संन्यस्त-कर्तुं त्वादिकः कुर्वण्णो मत्प्रसादाङ्गाश्वतं पदमव्ययमविकलं प्राप्नोति ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १८. ५६)

39. मदीयानि कर्माण्यालयनिर्मिणोद्यानकरणप्रदीपारोपणः माज्जना-भ्युक्षणोपलेपन-
पुष्पोपहरणपूजनोद्वर्तन-नाम-कीर्तनप्रदक्षिणानमस्काररतुत्यादीनि तान्यत्यर्थ-
प्रियत्वेनाचर । ००० मयि स्थिरां चित्तस्थितिं लब्ध्वा मतप्राप्तिरूपां सिद्धि-
मवाप्स्यसि ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १२. १०)

40. (अ) तस्माद् ब्राह्मणः पांडित्यं निर्विवृत्वा ल्येन तिष्ठासेत् ।
(बृहदारण्यक ३. ५)
(आ) ग्रनाविष्कुर्वन्नन्वयात् ।
(ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ३. ४. ४६)
(इ) बालस्य यत्स्वभावानाविष्करणरूपं कमं तदुपाददानो वर्तेत विद्वान् ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् ३. ४. ४६.)

41. (अ) मौनवदितरेषामप्युपदेशात् ।
(ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ३. ४. ४८)
(आ) अतः सुष्ठूकतम् यज्ञादिसर्वात्रिमध्यमंवन्मौनतृतीयः पांडित्यादिविद्यासहका-
रित्वेन विधीयते
(श्रीभाष्यम् ३. ४. ४८)

42. (अ) यतो भूतानामुत्पत्यादिका प्रवृत्तिर्येन च सर्वमिदं ततं, स्वकर्मणा तं
मामिन्द्राचन्तरात्मतयावस्थितमध्यरूपं मत्प्रसादान्मतप्राप्तिरूपां सिद्धि-
विन्दिति मानवः ।
(गीतायां-रामानुजभाष्यम् १८. ५६)
(आ) अहरहरनुष्ठीयमानवण्णात्रिमध्मानुगृहीततदुपासनरूप-मत्समाराघनप्रीतः ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् ४. ४. २२)

IV

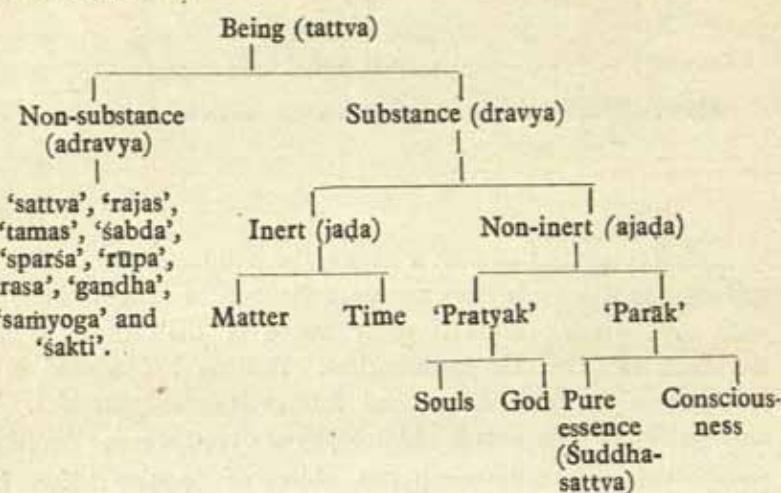
Ontological Categories

Matter—Time—Pure essence—Consciousness—souls—God.

God is one and without a second, the scriptures say.¹ But this according to Rāmānuja, does not mean the non-existence of individual souls and matter. What it really means is that there is only one God and that He is matchless. Yāmuna had argued in his Siddhi-traya on these lines,² and Rāmānuja agreed with him. The philosophy of Rāmānuja is a philosophy of devotion; and devotion is possible only when a devotee has an object of devotion before him. Rāmānuja established the non-duality of ultimate Reality by arguing that God has all the cit (conscious) element and the acit (non-conscious) stuff as His modes (prakāra or śeṣa),³ but he made it quite clear that individual souls, matter and God have their own peculiar qualities by virtue of which they remain distinct from one another.⁴ While dealing with the ontological aspect of Rāmānuja's philosophy, we are therefore required to notice in particular that the Ācārya believed in three principles viz., the cit or conscious souls, the acit or unconscious matter and Iśvara. The author of the Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha has cited a verse epitomising these categories.⁵ Cit is many in number and is of three types—the bound, the emancipated and the eternal. Acit is the unconscious principle characterised by three gunas—Sattva, rajas and tamas. Iśvara is the Almighty who rules over all from within and without.

In place of the two terms employed by Rāmānuja viz. cit and acit meaning respectively the individual souls and matter, Venkatanātha has preferred to use 'ajaḍa' (non-inert) and 'jada' (inert) respectively.⁶ The latter terms have been more in use specially in the writings of later Viśiṣṭādvaitins such as Anantārya⁷ and Śrinivāsādāsa.⁸ According to Venkatanātha, substance is twofold—inert and non-inert. The

following table will give a more comprehensive idea of the various kinds of substances :—



It is clear from the above table that Venkaṭanātha divided substance (dravya) into six, namely, matter (Prakṛti), time (kāla), pure essence (suddha sattva), consciousness (jñāna), soul (jīva) and God (Iśvara).⁹ Anantārya is of the same opinion¹⁰ and Śrinivāsadasa has also admitted all these categories.¹¹

An inert (jada) substance is that which is not self-illuminated.¹² It is twofold—matter (Prakṛti) and time (kāla). Matter is beginningless,¹³ but subject to mutation.¹⁴ Sattva, rajas and tamas are its three qualities.¹⁵—the qualities which induce men to act.¹⁶ At the end of a Kalpa, all movable and immovable things enter into prakṛti which is then undifferentiated.¹⁷ Again, at the beginning of a new kalpa, prakṛti brings forth, under Divine supervision, all beings—moving and non-moving.¹⁸ According to Anantārya, prakṛti has four phases. In its first phase it is called 'avibhakta tamas' and is like a seed lying on the floor, showing no signs of change. In the second phase it is 'vibhakta tamas' and is like a seed which has been sown in the soil, and which is ready to undergo changes. In the third place it is called 'akṣara' which is like a seed that has absorbed moisture from the earth. In the fourth phase it is 'avyakta' which is like a swollen seed ready to grow into a sprout.¹⁹ Prakṛti, then, develops gradually into 'mahān', 'ahankāra', the sense-organs, the subtle and the gross elements. It conceals the nature of God from individual souls, Rāmānuja says, and perverts their knowledge so as to believe that it is an object of their enjoyment.²⁰ This is the Divine māyā²¹. But this māyā is not a mere appearance or purely phenomenal on the views of Rāmānuja as is on

that of Advaita Vedānta. On the contrary, it is, Rāmānuja holds, as real as the prakṛti of Saṅkhya or the atoms of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika.

Time

The conception of time is very old. The Rgveda mentions that God created the year after he had created rite (ṛta), truth (satya), night (rātri) and ocean (samudra).²³ The Yajurveda tells us that all the 'moments' (nimeṣa) came out from the Resplendent Person i.e. God.²⁴ Vāsudeva Abhyāṅkara, author of Prakāśa, a commentary on the Yatindramatadipikā, supports the ancient conception of time by basing himself on the authority of Chāndogya Upaniṣad and the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa. According to him, the expression 'in the beginning' occurring in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (6-2-1) 'Only Sat it was in the beginning, O amiable',²⁴ indicates a distant past; and the word 'then' contained in the Taittiriya Upaniṣad (2.8.9.3) 'Neither *asat* nor *sat* existed then',²⁵ similarly points to a very remote past. Rāmānuja himself has not said much about time. He has, however, only incidentally referred, in the Vedārthasāṅgraha, to several divisions of time from a *nimeṣa* to Brahmā's life-time.²⁶ According to classical Viśiṣṭādvaita, time is one of the fundamental categories. Though an inert substance, it does not possess the three qualities of prakṛti. It is eternal and three-fold—past, present and future. Time has found no place as a separate category in the Saṅkhya system. Such statements as God transcends limitations of time, occurring in the Yoga-sūtras²⁷, do not indicate whether Patañjali and his followers recognise time as a fundamental reality. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school, however, included time in the list of substances²⁸ recognised by it and this was in agreement with Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. The minor divisions of time as recognised by Viśiṣṭādvaita school, are as follows :—²⁹

18	nimeṣas	...	1	kāṣṭhā
30	kāṣṭhās	...	1	kalā
30	kalā	...	1	muhurta
30	muhurta	...	1	ahorātra
15	ahorātra	...	1	pakṣa
2	pakṣas	...	1	mūṣa
2	mūṣas	...	1	ṛtu
3	ṛtus	...	1	ayana
2	ayana	...	1	varṣa

There are then 'yugas', 'manvantaras' and 'kalpas'.

A kalpa is a day of Brahmā. His night is also of the same duration, and his life-time is said to be his hundred years, which is

technically called 'para,'³⁰ and the half thereof 'parārdha. Rāmānuja, however, states that Vaikuṇṭha is not affected by the modes and changes of time. In this Śrinivāsadasa agrees with him.³¹

A non-inert (ajaḍa) substance is that which is self-illumined (svayamprakāśa). It is of two kinds : the one existing by itself and the other existing for another. An individual soul is a non-inert, self-illumined substance existing by itself. God is also a substance of the same nature. Both are therefore called 'pratyak'. The attributive consciousness of an individual soul is also non-inert and self-illumined, but it exists for another viz. the individual soul. A substance similar in nature is 'pure essence' or śuddha-sattva. Both are called 'parāk'. Rāmānuja himself has not mentioned the divisions of *cit* (Veṅkaṭanātha's ajaḍa) into 'pratyak' and 'parāk', but the terms have been freely used in later writings of Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy.

Consciousness

Consciousness is an attribute which cannot be separated from the subject. It presupposes a self whose attribute it is. The relation of an individual soul with its attributive consciousness is like that of a gem with its luminosity.³² It radiates from the centre, the soul, and reveals, not only itself but the external objects also. An individual soul is not, however, identical with consciousness ; both are distinct. But since the latter subsists in the former, they cannot be separated from each other. The relation of this inseparability is called 'apṛthaksiddhi'. In its empirical state, consciousness works through the mind with which it is usually identified.³³ It is again finite in the same state inasmuch as its scope becomes limited by some action or the other with which it is specially concerned. But it becomes infinite in salvation when its contact with any specific action comes to an end.³⁴

Śuddhasattva

Śuddha-sattva in Viśiṣṭādvaita is supposed to be the stuff of the bodies of God and the individuals in a state of purity. The Brahma-loka or Nitya-vibhuti is also made up of the same substance. But it is interesting to note that Rāmānuja has never said so. The Acārya has, on the contrary, mentioned that the Divine form is His own essence (svarūpabhūta) just as His bliss, consciousness and other attributes are.³⁵ As regards the word 'Brahma-loka', he takes it to be an appositional (Karmadhāraya) compound which suggests identity of the two.³⁶ Nevertheless, śuddha-sattva seems to have been a controversial topic on which the followers of Rāmānuja have differed from one another. According to some, as Veṅkaṭanātha points out, it is

inert (*jada*) ; some maintain that it is primarily inert but secondarily or metaphorically non-inert ; while others affirm that it is purely non-inert.³⁷ But all believe it to be a substance different from the *sattva* aspect of *prakrti*.³⁸ I propose to discuss this topic in detail in the chapter on the Divine form.

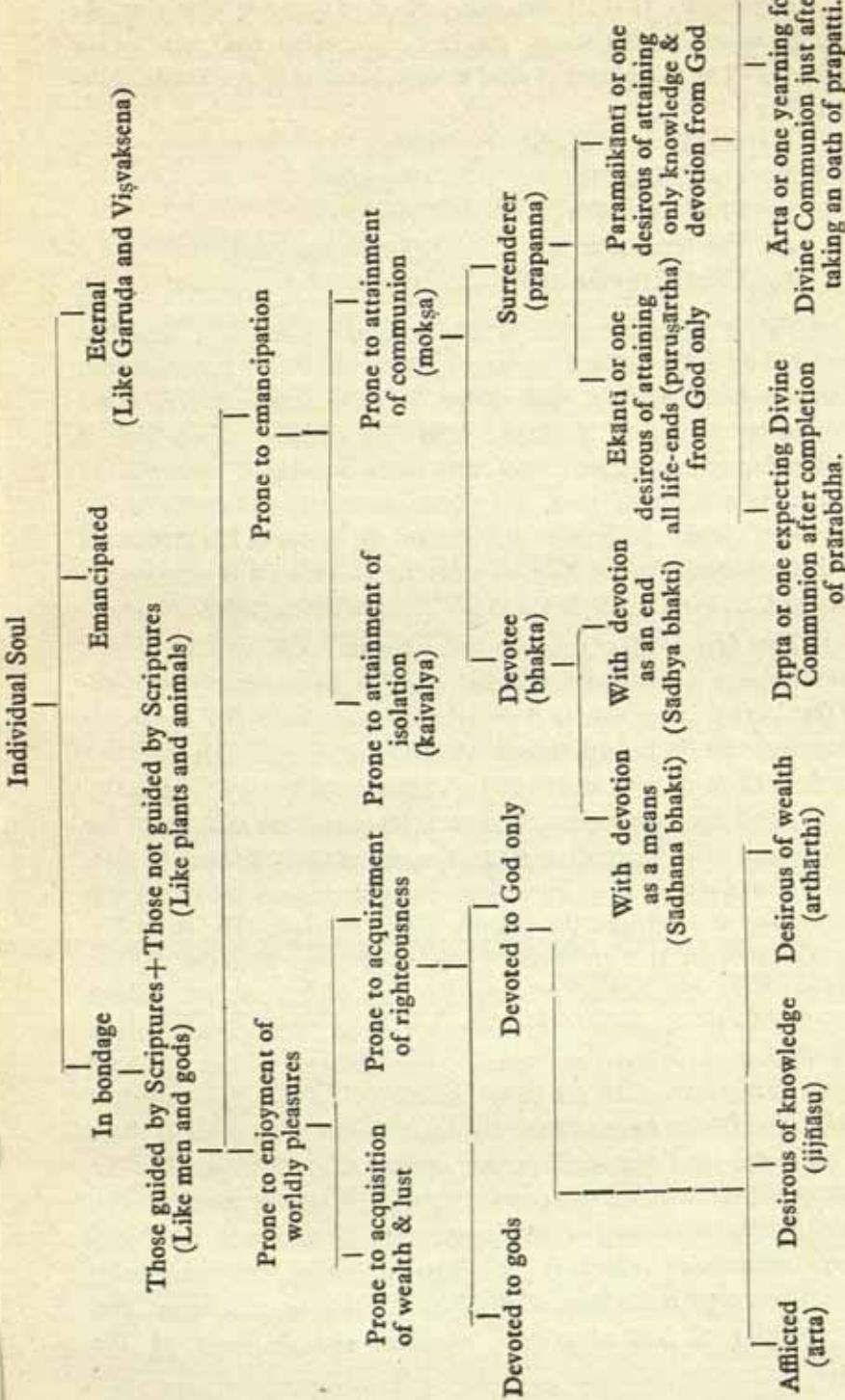
Self

The self or the individual soul is a finite,³⁹ but real substance. It is not merely a produce of super-imposition or ignorance. It is, however, a knower or the knowing subject. It is not mere consciousness which it possesses as an attribute.⁴⁰ Its nature is, really, twofold : it is consciousness and at the same time is that which *has* consciousness.⁴¹ By 'cid-rūpa' is meant self-illumination.⁴² But the self-illuminated self is a knower and not mere illumination or knowledge. Knowledge presupposes a subject and an object too. The verb 'to know,' must have, like any other verb, a subject, and being a transitive verb, it must have an object also.⁴³ The knower, Rāmānuja argues, does not merely undergo a change.⁴⁴ It is, he says, a support or a substratum (*āśraya*) of attributive consciousness which is its own essential quality.⁴⁵ The *ātman* who is characterised by consciousness is also the support of consciousness just as a gem is the support of its lustre (*prabha*).⁴⁶ Anantārya holds the same view.⁴⁷ According to the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, the *ātman* is that self-conscious principle in man which knows, 'I smell, speak, hear and think'.⁴⁸ The Brāhmaṇyaka says that consciousness is the eternal attribute of the soul.⁴⁹ Consciousness being a soul's inseparable, eternal and essential attribute, the soul and consciousness are sometimes identified.⁵⁰ The followers of Kāṇva recension of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, for instance, use the word 'Vijñāna' in a text where the followers of the Mādhyandina recension use the word 'ātman'.⁵¹

Souls are eternal and many in number. The Śvetāśvatara says that God is the eternal of the eternals and the conscious of the conscious.⁵² He is one and fulfils the desires of the many. The oneness of God and the multiplicity of souls is taught in the famous gāyatri text also. Rāmānuja regards the *ātman* (the individual soul) as *āṇu*.⁵³ The word 'āṇu' is generally translated into the English word 'atomic', but Schraeder says that it does not mean 'atomic' but 'small'.⁵⁴ The heart is said to be the seat of the soul.⁵⁵ The Gītā says, 'People discuss among themselves and hear from others much about the soul, but none is able to comprehend it.'⁵⁶ Why ? Because the real nature of it, says Rāmānuja, is concealed by the will of God.⁵⁷ None in this world has escaped the forgetfulness of one's real nature.

From Br̥haspati, the preceptor of the gods, down to a vanaspati or a blade of grass, each and every soul is suffering from its illusory identification with the body. Such concealment of the real nature of the soul is universal among mankind. It is most difficult to overcome.⁵⁸ Devotion, however, proves to be the only way out.⁵⁹

It is of interest, in this connection, to notice the following classification of individual souls, offered by Śrinivāsadāsa.



God

Rāmānuja's God is the one object of supreme adoration, the infinite, blissful, omniscient, omnipotent, creator and ruler of the universe. The five phases of God as mentioned in Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy are :-

1. The Transcendental	(Para),
2. The Emanation	(Vyuha)
3. The Incarnation	(Avatāra),
4. The Immanent	(Antaryāmi), and
5. The Consecrated Idols	(Arca).

This is the order given in the Viśvaksena Samhitā⁶⁰, which is approved by Śrinivāsadasa⁶¹. Quoting from the Pāñcarātra—rahasya, Mādhaba has, however, said in his Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha, that a devotee is to proceed gradually from the worship of the idols to the worship of incarnation ; from that to the worship of emanations ; then to the worship of God, the Transcendental ; and finally to the worship of God, the Immanent.⁶² Rāmānuja, however, has mentioned in his commentary to the Brahma-sūtra 2.2.41 only three aspects : (1) Sūkṣma i. e., Para, (2) Vyūha and (3) Vibhava⁶³ or avatāra.

The first is the Transcendental aspect. The notion of God's transcendence is as old as the Vedas. The R̥gveda has clearly mentioned that Puruṣa is not only in the world, but also transcends the phenomenal universe.⁶⁴ It further states that the entire world is only one fourth of Divinity, whereas His three-fourths are above it.⁶⁵ As a matter of fact, God does not possess four parts : it is only for the sake of the convenience of understanding the true nature of God, Rāmānuja says, that He has been held to have four parts.⁶⁶ In fact, the sacred text simply aims at describing the infinite glory of God. He is, really, not exhausted in the creation. He is much more than that.⁶⁷ But Para is not the Absolute of Advaita Vedānta which has no warmth of feeling for the creation. On the other hand, Rāmānuja's Para is an embodiment of love and grace. The Acārya maintains that all the six Divine attributes are fully manifested in the Para aspect of God. The Divine form of Para is, according to him, made of these six attributes ; and he calls this aspect of God subtle (Sūkṣma)⁶⁸. The Transcendent God has His own Divine life, and Rāmānuja holds that it is with this anthropomorphic aspect of God that a freed soul enjoys communion which is the summum bonum of human life.

The second is the Emanation (Vyuha). It is in this aspect that we conceive of God as creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world⁶⁹.

The third is the Immanent (Antaryāmi). God is not only busy in the work of the world, but He also pervades it. It is He who supports matter and individual souls. He is thus the indwelling principle of the universe.

The fourth is the Incarnation (Avatāra). God assumes at times, various forms—animal, human or divine—as occasion demands, with a view to protecting the virtuous, punishing the wicked and upholding righteousness.⁷⁰

The fifth is the Holy Images duly sanctified. Invoked by the devotees, God is pleased to condescend to inhabit the sacred idols for the sake of His worshippers. He forgets, as it were, His almighty nature and infinite glory to accept their humble offerings such as leaves, flowers, fruits and water.⁷¹

References

१. एकमेवाद्वितीयम् (खान्दोग्योपनिषद् ६. २. १)
२. “यथा चोलनृपः सम्भाडद्वितीयोद्य भूतले” इति तत्त्वल्य-नृपति-निवारणपरं वचो, न तु तदभूत्य-पुत्रकलत्रादिनिषेषकम् (सिद्धिव्रयम्)
३. (अ) समस्तचिदचिद्वस्तुशरीरायाखिलात्मने ।
श्रीमते निर्मलानन्दोद्वते विष्णवे नमः (वेदान्तसार)
(ब) अवेषचिदचिद्वस्तुशेषिणो शेषशायिने
निर्मलानन्त-कल्याणनिधये विष्णवे नमः । (वेदार्थसंग्रह)
(स) अतः प्रकृतिप्रकारसंस्थिते परमात्मनि प्रकारभूतप्रकृत्यर्थे विकारः । प्रकार्यशे चाविकारः । (वेदार्थसंग्रह)
४. अचिद्वस्तुनश्चिद्वस्तुनश्चेश्वरस्य स्वरूपस्वभाव-वैलक्षण्याच्चासंकराच्च भेदः समर्थितः । (वेदार्थसंग्रह पृष्ठ १४०)
५. ईश्वरदित्तदित्तचेति पदार्थवित्तयं हरिः । ईश्वरदित्तप्रोक्तो जीवो दृश्यमचित् पुनः ।
६. द्रव्यं द्वेषा विभक्तं जडमजडमिति प्राच्यमव्यक्तकालो । (तत्त्वमुक्ताकलाप १. ६)
७. द्रव्यं द्विविधं जडमजडं चेति । (सिद्धान्तसिद्धांजनम् पृष्ठ २)
८. तत्र जडाजडरूपयोर्विभक्तयोमर्मध्ये जडलक्षणमुच्यते । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका पृष्ठ ३६)
९. व्याख्यातं द्रव्यपट्टकम् । (तत्त्वमुक्ताकलाप ५. २)
१०. तत्र जडं प्रकृतिकालभेदाद् द्विविधम्, अजडं तु जीवेश्वर-नित्यविभूति-धर्म-भूतज्ञान-भेदाच्चतुर्विधमिति द्रव्याणि पट् । (सिद्धान्तसिद्धांजनम् पृष्ठ २)
११. तानि च द्रव्याणि पट् प्रकृति-काल-शुद्धसत्त्वधर्मभूतज्ञानजीवेश्वरभेदात् ।
(यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका, पृष्ठ ३६)
१२. जडत्वं चास्वप्रकाशत्वम् (सिद्धान्तसिद्धांजनम् पृष्ठ २)

13. (अ) प्रकृतिपुरुषो उभो ग्रन्थोन्य-संस्कृते अनादी इति विदि ।
(रामानुजकृत—गीताभाष्य १३. १६)

(ब) तथा प्रकृतेरप्यनादिता श्रुतिभिः प्रतिपादिता ।
(वेदार्थसंग्रह, पृष्ठ ११५)

14. प्रकृतिरेव स्वरूपेण विकारास्पदम् । (वेदार्थसंग्रह ११५)

15. सत्त्वरजस्तमांसि त्रयो गुणाः । (गीताभाष्य, १५. ५)

16. सर्वे पुरुषः प्रकृति-समुद्भवैः सत्त्वरजस्तमोभिः प्राक्तन-कर्मानुग्रहं प्रबुद्धे गुणः
स्वोचितं कर्म प्रत्यवशः कार्यंते प्रवर्तयंते । (गीताभाष्य ३. ५)

17. स्थावर-जंगमात्मकानि सर्वाणि भूतानि मामिकां मच्छरीरभूतां प्रकृति तमः-
शब्दवाच्यां नामरूपविभागानहीं कल्पक्षये चतुर्मुखावसानसमये मत्संकल्पाचान्ति ।
(गीताभाष्य ६. ७)

18. मदीया प्रकृतिः सत्यसंकल्पेन मयाध्यक्षेणेकिता सचराचरं जगत् सृयते ।
(गीताभाष्य ६. ७)

19. भूतलनिहितबीजस्थानीयमविभक्तं तमः, मृग्निस्तुतबीजविद्विभक्तं तमः, आद्वैष्यिक्य-
यवबीजतुल्यमक्षरम्, उच्छ्रूतबीजसमानमव्यक्तम्, अंकुरस्थानीयो महान् विवेकः ।
(सिद्धान्तसिद्धांजन, पृष्ठ १३)

20. (अ) भगवत्स्वरूपतिरोधानकरीं विपरीतज्ञानजननीं स्वविषयायाद्वच भोग्यतावृद्धे-
जननीं……गुणमयीं मायाम् । (शरणागतिगद्य)
(ब) अस्याः कार्यं भगवत्स्वरूपतिरोधानं स्वस्वरूपमोग्यत्व-वृद्धिश्च ।
(गीताभाष्य ७. १४)

21. मम एषा गुणमयी सत्त्वरजस्तमोमयी माया यस्माद् देवी देवेन क्रीडा-प्रवृत्तेन
मया एव निर्मिता । (गीताभाष्य ७. १४)

22. ऋतं च सत्यं चाभीद्वात्तपसोध्यजायत ।
ततो रात्र्यजायत ततः समुद्रो अर्णावः ।
समुद्रादण्ठादधि संवत्सरो अजायत । (ऋग्वेद १०. १६०. १, २)

23. सर्वे निमेषा जज्ञिरे विद्वतः पुरुषादधि । (शूक्ल यजुर्वेद ३२. २)

24. सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीत् (चान्दोग्य ६. २. १)

25. नासदासीन्नो सदासीत्तदानीम् (तीतिरीय ब्राह्मण २. ८. ६. ३)
(ऋग्वेद १०. १२. ६. १) श० ब्रा० १०. ५. ३. २

26. निमेषकाष्ठाकलामुहूर्तादि—परार्थपर्यन्तापरिमितावच्छेद—सर्वोत्पत्तिस्थिति—
विनाशादि—सर्वपरिणामनिमित्त-भूतकृतपरिणामास्पृष्टानन्त—महाविभूति ।
(वेदार्थसंग्रह)

27. पूर्वंयामपि गुहः कालेनानवच्छेदात् । (योगसूत्र १. २६)

28. (अ) पूर्विव्यापस्तेजो वायुराकाशं कालो दिगात्मा मन इति द्रव्याणि
(वैशेषिकसूत्रम् १. १. ५)
(ब) अपरस्मन्नपरं युगपच्चिरं क्षिप्रमिति काललिंगानि (वैशेषिकसूत्रम् २. २. ६)

29. (अ) निमेषा दश चाष्टो च काष्ठा त्रिशत् ता: कला:, त्रिशत्कला मुहूर्तः स्यादहो-
रात्रं तु तावतः.....
तद्वयुगसहस्रात्तं ब्राह्मं पूर्णमहर्विदः ।
रात्रिं च तावतीमेव तेहोरात्रविदो जनाः । (मनुस्मृति १. ६४-७३)

(ब) अष्टादश निमेषास्तु काष्ठा त्रिशत् ता: कला: ।
तास्तु त्रिशत् क्षणस्ते तु मुहूर्तो द्वादशास्त्रियम् ।
ते तु त्रिशदहोरात्रः पक्षस्ते दशपञ्च च ।
पक्षो पूर्वाभिरौ शुक्ल-कृष्णो मासस्तु तावुभौ ।
द्वो द्वो मार्गादिमासौ स्याद् ऋतुस्तैरयनं त्रिभिः ।
अयने द्वे गतिरुदग् दक्षिणाक्षस्य वत्सरः ।
(अमरकोप १. ४. ११-१३)

(स) त्रिशत्कोट्यस्तु वर्षाणां मानुषेण द्विजोत्तमाः ।
सप्तपश्चिस्तथान्यानि नियुतान्यधिकानि तु ॥
विशतिस्तु सहस्राणि कालो यः साधिकां विना ।
मन्वन्तरस्य संख्यैषा लिगेस्मिन् कथिता द्विजाः ॥
(शब्दार्थचिन्तामणिः)

(द) एवं चतुर्दशमन्वन्तरं त्रिशत् दिनं भवति । (पूर्वोक्तम्)

30. निजेन तस्य मानेन चायुवर्षेण तं स्मृतम् ।
तत्परात्म्यं तदद्युम्भावं पराद्युमिधीयते । (शब्दार्थचिन्तामणिः)

31. नित्यविभूतौ तु कालस्य विद्यमानत्वेषि तस्य न स्वातन्त्र्यम् । केचित्तु तत्र कालो
नास्तीति वदन्ति । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका पृष्ठ ५०)

32. अस्य ज्ञानस्वरूपस्यैव मणिप्रभृतीनां प्रभाश्रयत्वमिव ज्ञानाश्रयत्वमप्यविरुद्धम् ।
(श्रीभाष्य)

33. ज्ञानस्य मनः-सहकारित्वनियमान्मन एवेत्युपचारादुक्तमिति न विरोधः ।
(यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका पृष्ठ ५६)

34. अनुकृत्य कर्मणा संकुचितज्ञानस्य.....मुक्तस्य त्वसंकुचित-ज्ञानस्य ।
(श्रीभाष्य ४।१।१५)

35. यथा ज्ञानादयः परस्य ब्रह्मणः स्वरूपतया निर्देशात् स्वरूपभूतगुणास्तथेदमपि रूपं
श्रुत्या स्वरूपतया निर्देशात् स्वरूपभूतम् । वेदार्थसंग्रह पृष्ठ २५०)

36. निपादस्थपतिन्यायेन ब्रह्मैव लोको ब्रह्मलोक इति कर्मधारयस्यैव युक्तत्वात् ।
(श्रीभाष्य ४. ३. ११)

37. ज्ञानत्वं चेद्रहस्यागमविदितमिति स्वीकृतं नित्यभूतेः ।
पाद्गुण्यात्मत्वमेवं प्रसजति सह तत् पाठ्योतो जडा सा ।
तत्सम्बन्धात् कुतदिवद् तदुपचरणमित्याहुरेके परे तु ।
ज्ञानत्वाजाद्यकण्ठोक्त्यनुग्रहामवदन्मुख्यतामात्मनीव ॥
(तत्त्वमुक्ताकलाप ३. ६२)

38. स्वसत्ताभासकं सत्त्वं गुणसत्त्वाद् विलक्षणम् (तत्त्वमुक्ताकलाप ३.७२)

39. अतोणुरेवायमात्मा (श्रीभाष्य २. ३. २३)

40. यथा पृथिव्या गन्धस्य गुणत्वेनोपलभ्यमानस्य ततो व्यतिरेकस्तथा जानामीति
ज्ञातुर्गुणत्वेन प्रतीयमानस्य ज्ञानस्यात्मनो व्यतिरेकः सिद्धः । दर्शयति च श्रुति-
र्जानात्प्रवायां पुरुषः इति । (श्रीभाष्य २. ३. २७)

41. एवमात्मा चिद्रूप एव हि चैतत्प्रगुणकः । (श्रीभाष्य)

42. चिद्रूपता हि स्वयंप्रकाशता । स्वयंप्रकाशोयमात्मा ज्ञातेव न प्रकाशमात्रम् ।
(श्रीभाष्य)

43. न हि लोकवेदपोर्जनातीत्यादेरकर्मकस्याकर्तुं कस्य च प्रयोगो दृष्टचरः ।
(श्रीभाष्य)

44. न च ज्ञातृत्वम् विक्रियात्मकत्वम् । (श्रीभाष्य)

45. ज्ञातृत्वं हि ज्ञान-गुणात्मयत्वम् । ज्ञानं चास्य नित्यस्य स्वाभाविकधर्मत्वेन नित्यम् ।
(श्रीभाष्य)

46. ज्ञातुः प्रभास्थानीयस्य ज्ञानस्य स्वात्र्यादन्यत्र वृत्तिर्मणि-प्रभावदुपप्यते ।
(श्रीभाष्य २. ३. २६)

47. स चायमात्मा ज्ञानात्रयो ज्ञानस्वरूपदत्त (सिद्धान्तसिद्धाङ्कन पृष्ठ ५६)

48. अथ यो वेदेन्द्रं जिग्राणीति स आत्मा..... (छान्दोग्य ८. १२. ४)

49. न हि विज्ञातुर्विज्ञातेविपरिलोपो विज्ञतेऽविनाशित्वात् । (बृहदारण्य ४. ३. २६)

50. तद्गुणसारत्वाद् विज्ञानगुणसारत्वादात्मनो विज्ञानमिति व्यपदेशः विज्ञानमेवास्य
सारभूतो गुणः । (श्रीभाष्य २. ३. २६)

51. उभये माध्यन्दिनाः काण्वाश्चात्तर्यामिणो नियाम्यत्वेन वागादिभिरत्येतनः सममेन
शाश्रीरमपि विभज्याधीयते य आत्मनि तिष्ठन्..... इति माध्यन्दिनाः यो
विज्ञाने तिष्ठन्तित्यादि च काण्वाः । (श्रीभाष्य १. २. २१)

52. नित्यो नित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानां
मेको बहुनां यो विदधाति कामान् (देवताद्वयतर ६. १३)

53. अतोणुरेवायमात्मा (श्रीभाष्य २. ३. २३)

54. The surprising solution of problem, then, is that in our passage
the word *anu* does not mean 'atomic' but 'small, little' in the sense
of spatially restricted.
(Schradler's Introduction to Pāñcarātra, page 90).

55. आत्मनोपि देहदेशविशेषे स्थित्युपगमात् । हृदयदेशे ह्यात्मनः स्थितिः श्रूयते ।
(श्रीभाष्य २. ३. २५)

56. आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कदिच्चदेन
माइचर्यवद् वदति तथैव चान्यः,
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति;
श्रुत्वाप्येन वेद न चैव कदिच्चतु ॥ (गीता ३. २. ४)

57. पराभिष्यानात्प्रमपुरुषसंकल्पादस्य जीवस्य स्वाभाविकं रूपं तिरोहितम् ।
(श्रीभाष्य ३. २. ४)

58. एषा यथोक्ता गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया दुःखेन प्रत्ययः अतिक्रमणं यस्याः सा दुरत्यया । (गीताभाष्य ७. १४)

59. मामेव मायाविनं स्वात्मभूतं सर्वात्मना ये प्रपद्यन्ते ते मायामेतां सर्वभूतमोहिनीं तरन्ति अतिक्रमन्ति । (पूर्वोक्तम्)

60. मम प्रकाशः पंचेति प्राहुवेदान्तपारगाः
परो व्यूहश्च विभवो नियन्ता सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
अचवितारहच तथा दयालुः पुरुषाहृतिः
इत्येवं पंचधा प्राहुमी रहस्यविदो जनाः ॥

Visvaksena Samhītā quoted in Prakāśa, a commentary on Yatindra-mata-dipikā, page 83

61. एवं प्रकार ईश्वरः परव्यूह-विभवान्तर्याम्यर्चाविताररूपेण पंचप्रकारः ।
(यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका, पृष्ठ ८३)

62. तदर्चाविभवव्यूह-सूक्ष्मान्तर्यामिसंज्ञकम् ।
यदाश्रित्येव विद्वग्नस्ततज्ज्ञेयं प्रपद्यते ।
पूर्वपूर्वोदितोपास्ति-विशेषशीण-कलमयः,
उत्तरोत्तरमूर्तीनामुपास्त्यधिकृतो भवेत् । (सर्वदर्शनसंग्रहे रामानुजदर्शनम्)

63. तदिं वासुदेवास्यं परं ब्रह्म सूक्ष्मव्यूहविभवमेवभिन्नं……। विभवाच्चाद व्यूहं प्राप्य व्यूहाच्चानात्परं ब्रह्म वासुदेवास्यं सूक्ष्मं प्राप्यत इति वदन्ति ।
(श्रीभाष्य २. ३. ४१)

64. त्रिपादूध्यं उदैत् पुरुषः (ऋग्वेद १०. ६०. ४३)

65. पादोस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि (पूर्वोक्तम्)

66. यों “चतुष्पाद ब्रह्म पोडशकलं” पादोस्य विश्वा भूतानि” इत्युमानव्यपदेशः स बुद्ध्यर्थः परस्योपासनार्थः: “सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म” इत्यादिभिर्जंगत्कारणस्य परस्य ब्रह्मणोपरिच्छिन्नत्वात्स्वत उन्मित्त्वासम्भवात् (श्रीभाष्य ३. २. ३२)

67. अतो ज्यायैश्च पुरुषः (ऋग्वेद १०. ६०. ३)

68. सूक्ष्मं तु केवलयाङ्गुण्यविग्रहम् तथा वासुदेवास्यं परं ब्रह्म सम्पूर्णवाङ्गुण्य-वपुः ।
(श्रीभाष्य २. २. ४१)

69. तत्र संकर्यणो……जगत्-संहारं च करोति । प्रद्युम्नः……सुषिं च करोति । अनिरुद्धः……रक्षणस्य निर्वाहकः ।
(तत्त्वलय cited by Vāsudeva Abhyāṅkara in his Prakāśa commentary on Yatindra-mata-dipikā, page 85)

70. सम्भवामि युगे युगे । (गीता ४.६)

71. पलं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमद्यनामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥
(गीता ६.२६)

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF GOD

Part I

Rāmānuja's criticism of the views of Śaṅkara, Bhāskara and Yādava.

In order to establish his theistic conception of the universe, Rāmānuja has criticized the views of his opponents. His polemic was mainly directed against Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara, besides the schools of Bhāskara and Yādava.

The Advaita-vāda usually comprises the views of Śaṅkara and his followers. Before offering his criticism of the Advaita schools, Rāmānuja points out its main features. According to Advaita, Rāmānuja says, Brahman is essentially unqualified consciousness only, and though in itself free and self-luminous, it appears to be in bondage. When true knowledge viz. 'Thou art That' dawns upon the individual, he becomes one with Brahman.¹ The differences are not real. 'Some Vedāntists hold that there is only one finite soul and one body and all the universe with its entire multiplicity is his imagining'². Illusory are the preacher, the scripture, the reader as well as the knowledge attained through the scriptures. And all this is known through the illusory scriptures.³

To Advaita position that Brahman is unqualified, Rāmānuja objects thus. The Upaniṣads say : 'It willed to become many',⁴ and 'The created beings have their origin in It, are accommodated in It, have their support in It'.⁵ 'It' stands for Brahman and we know from these scriptural texts that Brahman creates, supports and destroys the world. The scriptures also tell us that Brahman is all-knowing, all-powerful, lord of all ; all beings are Its modes ; none is equal to or greater than It ; Its desire is true ; Its resolve is infallible ; It enlightens all. These and other qualities of Brahman, contends Rāmānuja, would be meaningless, should the Advaita view be taken as correct.

Rāmānuja then proceeds to refute the Advaita view that Brahman is real but the created world is unreal.⁶ He says that if the effect be unreal, then the Upaniṣadic proposition, 'One can know all

by knowing one', would be meaningless, because in that case there would be nothing at all for us to know or there would be confusion between the real and the unreal.⁷ The proposition, therefore, can hold good only if the 'all' be taken to be real.

It might still be contended that some Upaniṣadic passages state that Brahman is devoid of any quality. Such passages are : 'This was, O amiable, only *Sat* before',⁸ 'Only one without a second',⁹ 'Truth, knowledge and infinite is Brahman'¹⁰; 'Partless, actionless and quality-less'¹¹. To all this Rāmānuja's reply is that here the word 'this' refers to the world; the world 'before' to the state before creation.¹² When the scriptures state that the world was '*sat*', the word '*Sat*', says Rāmānuja, refers to the *Sadātmaka* i.e. one whose Soul is *Sat* (God). According to him, the names and forms could not be differentiated until the process of creation started.¹³ The subtle condition of matter in the state of chaos is indeed the cause of the gross stage of matter in the cosmos; but Brahman is associated with matter in both its aspects as its inner ruler. As Brahman is one and the same in the two cases, the cause is not separate from the effect. In fact, Rāmānuja holds that the effect is but another phase of the cause itself. Rāmānuja further states that the denial of a second to Brahman is really the denial of any other ruler of the universe. The word 'advaita' (one without a second), he continues, does not imply that Brahman is unqualified, one and homogeneous, but that It is peerless without there being a parallel to It.¹⁴

Rāmānuja holds that the universe in its multiplicity is related to God just as a body is to a soul. God and the universe can, therefore, be no more treated as identical than soul and body can be. In support of this view Rāmānuja quotes such passages from the Upaniṣads as 'Who dwells in *Ātman*',¹⁵ 'Whose body is *Ātman*',¹⁶ 'Whose body is earth'.¹⁷ Since the universe consisting of matter and individual souls is, as it were, the body of Brahman, the names of multifarious objects ultimately denote Brahman.¹⁸ Thus the word 'thou' in the famous statement, 'Thou art That', signifies the indwelling God of whom the individual soul signified by the word 'thou' is a bodily aspect, and the word 'That' means God who is the primal cause of the universe and the repository of all auspicious qualities.¹⁹ As the Upaniṣads reveal, God is changeless and faultless, and the universe is the product of the mutations of His body viz. *prakṛti*.

The Advaita school holds that Brahman is unqualified consciousness, because It has been characterised as 'consciousness alone' by the scriptures.²⁰ But Rāmānuja disagrees by holding that conscious-

ness is an attribute of Brahman, and that a substance possessing an attribute cannot but be qualified.²¹ The soul, in fact, is knower and knowledge—both in one. It has, therefore, consciousness as one of its attributes. The soul cannot be identified with consciousness for the simple reason that it is more than consciousness. Moreover, there is definite evidence in the scriptures to show that Brahman is qualified: 'The Reality is all-knowing²² and all-pervading', 'Its perceptual and energetic activity is inherent and manifold.²³ Consciousness is thus only one of the attributes of God. How, then, can only one of them be taken to reveal His entire nature? The mention of truth and consciousness as qualities of God leaves no doubt about the fact that He is qualified.²⁴ The expressions pointing to God's being devoid of attributes (*nirguna*) simply mean that He can not be said to possess the attributes which belong to objects other than Himself.²⁵

It is urged by the followers of Advaita that the unqualified Reality is self-luminous and that there is no need of proving that It is unqualified. All words, again, indicate the qualified nature of the thing; and if qualifications are set apart, there remains an unqualified self-luminous entity which is pure consciousness (*jñāptimātra*). To this Rāmānuja replies that even the word 'self-luminous' (*jñāptimātra*) signifies something particular, because the root and the affix of which the word consists together have a particular significance.²⁶

It is further urged by the followers of Advaita that Brahman is ever luminous by itself in Its entirety. But Rāmānuja contends that if Brahman be purely self-luminous, the superimposition of the not-self on It is impossible.²⁷ Snakehood cannot be superimposed on a rope so long as the latter is luminous. If one specific character viz *jñāpti*, however, be admitted to Brahman on the authority of the sacred texts, other specific qualities mentioned in the scriptures such as bliss, infinity and truth should also be attributed to It.

If it is contended that there are in the scriptures passages which deny attributes to Brahman (*neti neti*), it would be necessary to enquire into the nature of this denial. What, then, is the real meaning of the denial of attributes to Brahman? Rāmānuja replies that Bādarāyaṇa himself has made the point clear in the *Brahmasutra* 3-2-22.²⁸ What must be denied to Brahman are the qualities which signify its limitations. The scriptural denial of multiplicity to ultimate Reality, Rāmānuja points out, means only this that nothing exists independently of God.²⁹ In other words, all things in the world are animated by God; they constitute His body, so to say. There is only

one God in the universe, and the denial of multiplicity is intended to strengthen the belief.

The followers of Advaita hold that Brahman in Itself is unqualified consciousness, but that when Its essence (*svarūpa*) is concealed by nescience, It appears to be many. The view, Rāmānuja contends, is not sound for the following reasons.

The concealment of luminosity by nescience may mean either of two things : (1) the obstruction of the generation of luminosity ; (2) the extinction of luminosity.³⁰ But since, as the Advaitin would himself agree, the luminosity cannot be generated, what he could mean here would be the extinction of luminosity which is the same thing as the extinction of the very essence of Brahman.³¹

Two of the statements made by the Advaita school about Brahman are worth noticing here. The one is that nescience (*avidya*) cannot affect the self-luminosity of Brahman ; the other is that it is owing to nescience (*avidya*) that Brahman, in Itself one, appears to be many. But Rāmānuja objects that the two propositions are contradictory to each other ; for the former denies that nescience affects the Brahman, whereas the latter affirms that it does.

According to the Advaita school, knowledge of the identity of the *jīva* and Brahman—the individual and the absolute—removes nescience. Rāmānuja objects to this proposition and advances his objection in the form of a dilemma. If the disillusionment is a part of the essence of Brahman, there is no reason why anyone should make an effort to get rid of the illusion. The effort would, really, be useless. If, on the contrary, the disillusionment is distinct from Brahman, no effort on the part of anyone would succeed in getting rid of the illusion. In other words, disillusionment being either essential to or distinct from Brahman, the attempt at the attainment of disillusionment would be either superfluous inasmuch as disillusionment is eternally realized; or it would be absurd, because the disillusionment is never attainable.³² Besides, the knowledge which is said to be the means of the removal of nescience is itself of the nature of nescience. How can it then remove nescience ?

Another difficulty, according to Rāmānuja, would arise thus. Who is it, it may be asked, that knows the world of phenomena to be unreal ? It must be either Brahman or a superimposition on It. If Brahman Itself be the knower, then the Advaitin must admit, obviously inconsistently with his position, that Brahman, as characterised by the quality of knowerhood, is *Saguṇa*³³ If on the other hand, the

knower is not Brahman Itself but a superimposition on It, then, Rāmānuja argues, the superimposition as well as its cause, *viz.*, nescience should be admitted by the Advaitin to persist.³⁴

The knowledge derived through illusory sources must, argues Rāmānuja, be illusory or false. Rāmānuja illustrates this argument thus. Suppose a man, while walking, sees a rope lying on the road and mistakes it for a snake and becomes afraid. Just at that moment, an acquaintance of his, whom he definitely knows to be a liar, happens to come there and tries to disillusion him. But all his efforts to persuade his friend to give up fear fail and the fear persists. Similarly, the knowledge derived from the so-called false sources of knowledge must be false and useless. So the followers of Advaita should either regard the scriptures and the contents thereof as totally real or desist from citing from them to prove their position. Rāmānuja, therefore, points out that in the sacred texts on which the school of Advaita also relies contain no words or expressions whatever which divest, or aim at divesting, Brahman of Its qualities.

Rāmānuja then turns his attention to two prominent thinkers—Bhāskara and Yādava, who while holding, like him, that Brahman is qualified, differ from him in some details.

According to Bhāskara, Brahman possesses all auspicious qualities such as sinlessness but is affected by the manifold mutations of matter which, for him, are real and not illusory. He further holds that matter limits Brahman by imposing upon It limiting adjuncts (*upādhi*), with the result that Brahman becomes individual souls with experiences of pleasure and pain. An individual soul, though a part and parcel of Brahman, is yet divided from the latter by Its adjuncts which are of course real.

If Bhāskara be right, then all the imperfections arising out of the limiting adjuncts must, argues Rāmānuja, belong to Brahman. But in that case the Vedic passages which proclaim that Brahman is without any imperfections or defects would be meaningless.³⁵

Bhāskara may, of course, contend that imperfection belongs only to the individual soul which is the product of the limitation of Brahman, whereas Brahman remains unpolluted just as the vast space (*mahākāśa*) remains unaffected by the small space such as that which is covered by a jar (*ghaṭakāśa*). But it is absurd, says Rāmānuja, to conceive that a jar can divide indivisible space into parts. Just as a jar, he continues, is in direct contact with the space,

so the upādhi must be in direct contact with Brahman which is equally partless and indivisible.³⁶

Besides, the view that the space occupied by a jar differs from the rest of the endless space is not sound. If we remove a jar from one place to another, the space in the former case will become 'a space without a jar', and in the latter case it will become 'a space with a jar'. Similarly Brahman being one, without any spatial limits, if a limiting adjunct (upādhi viz. antaḥ-karana) goes from one place to another, the Brahman of this place will become free as it were, whereas the Brahman of that place will be affected. The view held by Bhāskara, objects Rāmānuja, would characterise Brahman as free in one case and as circumscribed in another. At each step of a person Brahman would thus alternately be unaffected, and the process will continue to repeat itself throughout the space a person traverses which is ludicrous indeed.³⁷

Another objection urged by Rāmānuja runs thus. If transmutation should be admitted as an essential feature of Brahman, the Vedic passages which have regarded Brahman as immutable would become meaningless³⁸. Further, if transmutation be ascribed not to Brahman but to Its energy, then the difficulty would arise as to whether the energy is to be viewed as essential to Brahman or as a product of Its transformation. Rāmānuja therefore concludes that the transmutation of Brahman is absurd in either case.³⁹

According to Yādava, Brahman possessing unrivalled, unlimited, inherent and auspicious qualities undergoes real (not illusory) transmutation into the material world and souls—human and divine. God and matter and individual souls, Yādava continues, differ from one another. God does not experience the kind of pleasure and pain which is experienced by individual souls. Again, in the state preceding Its transmutation, Brahman is undifferentiated; because, as he says, God, individual souls and matter are then one. Hence non-difference is equally real. This view is called 'Bhedābheda-vāda', the doctrine of difference-cum-nondifference.⁴⁰

Against Yādava, Rāmānuja's objections are as follows. Since Brahman is transformed into souls and matter, the experience of pleasure and pain which individual souls may have must belong to Brahman. It may indeed be contended that Brahman is not exhausted in the souls and matter but is more than these and that in that aspect in which It transcends them, It is possessed of all auspicious qualities such as omniscience and infallible determination. But this,

Rāmānuja argues, would mean that Brahman is only partially characterised by auspicious qualities. Besides, it would also follow that Brahman may be happy in one aspect and at the same time unhappy in another, which is absurd. Devadatta, for example, can in no way be happy, if one of his hands be besmeared with sandalwood paste and decorated with jewellery, while the other is beaten with a club or set on fire. Rāmānuja, therefore, concludes that the view of 'Bhedabheda' is no better than Advaita-vāda which attributes negligence or illusion to Brahman.⁴¹

References

1. (अ) परं ब्रह्मावाजं भ्रम-परिगतं संसरति तत् (वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् ३) ।
(पा) निविशेषज्ञानमालमेव ब्रह्म । तच्च नित्यमुक्तप्रकाशात्वमावमपि तत्त्वमस्यादिसामानाद्विकरण्यावगत-जीवैवयं ब्रह्मावाजं बध्यते मुच्यते च ।
(वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् १३)
2. (अ) एकमेव शरीरं जीवदत् निर्जीवानीतराणि शरीराणि ।
(वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् १३)
(पा) A History of Indian Philosophy by S. Dasgupta Vol I, page 477
3. आचार्यो ज्ञानोपदेष्टा मिथ्या, शास्त्रं च मिथ्या, शास्त्रप्रमाता च मिथ्या, शारक-जन्यं ज्ञानं च मिथ्या, एतत् सर्वं मिथ्याभूतेनैव शास्त्रेणांवावगम्यते ।
(वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् १३)
4. तदैकत बहु स्यां प्रजायेय (आन्दोग्योपनिषद् ६. २. ३) ।
5. सन्मूलाः सौम्येमाः प्रजाः सदायतनाः सत्प्रतिष्ठाः (आन्दोग्य ६.८.४, ६)
6. कारणाभूतस्यैव सत्यतां विकारजातस्य चासत्यतां मृद-हृष्टातेन दर्शयित्वा सत्यभूतस्यैव ब्रह्मणः निविशेषता प्रतिपादिता (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १७) ।
7. (अ) एक-विज्ञानेन सर्वविज्ञानं सर्वस्य मिथ्यात्वे सर्वस्य ज्ञातव्यस्याभावान्नसेत्यति; सत्यमिथ्यात्वयोरेकता-प्रसक्तिर्वा । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १८)
(पा) ये तु कार्यकारणयोरनन्यत्वं कार्यस्य मिथ्यात्वाश्रयणेन वर्णयन्ति न तेषां कार्यकारणयोरनन्यत्वं सिद्ध्यति, सत्यमिथ्यात्वयोरेकत्यानुपपत्तिः । तथासति ब्रह्मणो मिथ्यात्वं, जगतः सत्यत्वं वा स्यात् । (थीभाष्यम् पृष्ठम् ३१३)
२. १. १५
8. सदेव सौम्येदमग्र आसीत् । (आन्दोग्य ६. २. १.)
9. एकमेवाद्वितीयम् (आ० ६. २. १.)
10. सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तम् (तैत्तिरीयोपनिषद् २. १. १.)
11. निष्कलं निष्किर्यं निर्मुणम् (श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषद् ६. १६)

12. इदमिति जगन्निर्दिष्टम् अग्र इति च सृष्टे: पूर्वकालः (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् २५)

13. एकमेवेति सदापन्नस्य जगतस्तदानीमविभक्तनामरूपतां प्रतिपाद्य तत्प्रतिपादनेनैव सतो जगदुपादानत्वं प्रतिपादितम् । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् २६)

14. स्वव्यतिरिक्त-निमित्तकारणाम् “अद्वितीय”-यदेन प्रतिष्ठितम् । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् २१६)

15. य आत्मनि तिष्ठन्
16. यस्यात्मा शरीरम्
17. यः पृथिव्यां तिष्ठन् यस्य पृथिवी शरीरम् । } ब्रह्मदारण्यक ३. ७.

18. (अ) देवो मनुष्यो यज्ञो राक्षसः पशुमूर्गः पक्षी बृक्षो जला काष्ठं शिला तुणं घटः पटः इत्यादयः सर्वे……शब्दाः—तदन्तर्यामिपरमात्मपर्यन्तस्य संघातस्यैव वाचकाः । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् ३०)

(आ) सर्वस्य चिदचिद्ब्रह्मस्तुनो ब्रह्मशरीरत्वाद् सर्वशरीरं सर्वप्रकारं सर्वशब्देवाहावाभिधीयते (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् ३४)

19. तत्पदं जगल्कारणभूतं सकलकल्प्याणुगुणगणाकरं निरवद्यं निर्विकारमाच्छटे, त्वमिति च तदेव ब्रह्म जीवान्तर्यामिरूपेण स्वशरीरजीवप्रकार-विशिष्टमाच्छटे । तदेव……ब्रह्मण्येव तत्प्रमिति द्वयोः पदयोद्वृत्तिरक्ता । (वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् ३५)

(ब) ऐश्वर्यवादाश्च सामानाधिकरण्यमुख्यार्थतोपादनादेव सुस्थिताः । (वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् ३५)

20. अयमात्मा……प्रज्ञानवत् एव । (ब्रह्मदारण्यकोपनिषद् ४. ५. १३)

21. (अ) स्वरूपनिरूपणधर्मशब्दा हि धर्ममुखेन स्वरूपमपि प्रतिपादयन्ति । (वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् ४१)

(आ) ज्ञानेन धर्मेण स्वरूपमपि निरूपितं न तु ज्ञानमात्रं ब्रह्म……

22. यः … सर्वज्ञः सर्वविदित्यादिज्ञातृत्ववश्वते । (वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् ४१)

23. परास्य शक्तिविविधैव श्रूते स्वाभाविकी ज्ञानवलक्रिया च । (इतेताद्वतरोपनिषद् ६. ८)

24. ज्ञानस्य धर्म-मालत्वाद् धर्ममालस्यैकस्य वस्तुत्प्रतिपादनानुपपत्तेश्च । अतः सत्यज्ञानादिपदानि स्वार्थभूत-ज्ञानादिविशिष्टमेव ब्रह्म प्रतिपादयन्ति । (वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठ ४३)

25. निर्गुणवादाश्च प्राकृतहेय-गुणनिषेधपरतया व्यवस्थिताः । (व० संग्रहः पृष्ठम् १३८)

26. केन शब्देन तद् वस्तु निर्दिश्य तद्गता विशेषा निरस्यन्ते ? ज्ञातिमात्रशब्देनेति चेत्, न; सोपि सविशेषमेव वस्तववलभवते प्रकृतिप्रत्ययरूपेण विशेषगमितत्वात् । (व० सं० पृष्ठम् ४७)

27. ब्रह्मस्वरूपं कृत्स्नं सर्वदा स्वयमेव प्रकाशते चेत्, न तस्मिन्नन्यधर्माध्यासः सम्भवति । (व० सं० पृष्ठम् ४८)

28. (अ) प्रकृतातैवत्त्वं प्रतियेधति ततो ब्रवीति च भूयः (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ३, २, २१)

(ग्रा) यतश्च निषेधानन्तरं ब्रह्मणो भूयो मुण्डजातं ब्रवीति अतश्च प्रकृति-विशेषणायोगितामात्रम् ब्रह्मणः प्रतिषेधति ।.....ब्रह्मणः सविशेषत्वं न प्रतिविध्यते अपि तु पूर्वप्रकृतेयत्तामात्रम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. २. २१)

29. सर्वप्रकारसंस्थितः सर्वेश्वरः स एवेति तत्प्रत्यनीकाब्रह्मात्मकनानात्वं प्रतिविद्धम् । (वे० सं० पृष्ठ ६४)

30. अविद्या प्रकाशस्तिरोहित इति प्रकाशप्रतिबन्धो वा, विद्यमानस्य विनाशो वा । प्रकाशस्यानुत्पादत्वाद्द्विनाश एव स्यात् । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ६६)

31. तिरोधानं नाम प्रकाशनिवारणं स्वरूपातिरेकि-प्रकाशधर्मनिभ्युपगमेन प्रकाशस्यैव स्वरूपत्वात् स्वरूपनाश एव स्यात् । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ६५)

32. ब्रह्मव्यतिरेकेणैतदभ्युपगमे पुनरविद्या न निवृत्ता स्यात् । ब्रह्मैव चेन्निवृत्तिः तत्प्रागप्यविशिष्टमिति वेदान्तज्ञानात्पूर्वमेव निवृत्तिः स्यात् । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ६०)

33. ब्रह्मस्वरूपस्यैव ज्ञातुत्वाभ्युपगमेस्मदीय एव पक्षः परिशृहीतः स्यात् । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ८२)

34. अध्यस्तं चेदयमव्यासस्तन्मूलाविद्यान्तरं च निवर्त्तकज्ञानाविषयतया तिष्ठत्येव । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ८२)

35. उपाधि-ब्रह्म-व्यतिरिक्त-वस्त्वन्तरानभ्युपगमाद् ब्रह्मप्येवोपाधि-संसर्गदोषोपाधिकाः सर्वे दोषा ब्रह्मप्येव स्युः । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ८६)

36. निरवयवस्याकाशस्यानवच्छेदस्य घटादिभिश्छेदासम्भवात्तेनैव आकाशेन घटादयः संयुक्ता इति ब्रह्मणोप्यच्छेदत्वाद् ब्रह्मैवोपाधि-संयुक्तं स्यात् । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ८६)

37. उपाधी गच्छति संयुक्तवियुक्त-ब्रह्मप्रदेशभेदाच्च ब्रह्मप्येवोपाधि-संसर्गः, क्षणे-क्षणे बन्धमोक्षो च स्यातामिति सन्तः परिहसन्मिति । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ६४)

38. स्वरूपपरिणामाभ्युपगमादविकारत्व-श्रुतिर्वाध्यते (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ६४)

39. उभयपक्षेषि स्वरूपपरिणामोऽवर्जनीय एव । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् ६४)

40. ब्रह्मैव सुरनर-तिर्यक-स्थावर-नारकिन-स्वर्ग्येष्वर्ग-चेतवनैक-स्वभावं स्वभावतो विलक्षणमविलक्षणं च वियादिनानाविधमलरूप-परिणामास्पदं च । (वे० सं० पृष्ठम् १५)

41. ब्रह्माज्ञानपक्षादपि पापीयानयं भेदाभेदपक्षः । (वेदार्थ-संग्रह, पृष्ठम् ६७)

Part II

The cult of Viṣṇu is not the cult of the sun—Viṣṇu's help to Indra in the latter's fight with Vṛtra and Śambara—The cult of Viṣṇu is not modelled on the cult of Indra—Viṣṇu is not 'Hercules-Lyra' of the sky—The cult of Trimūrti—Viṣṇu, the Brahman of the Upaniṣads—The teachings of some of the oft-quoted *vidyās*.

Rāmānuja's God is indeed devoid of physical qualities : sattva, rajas and tamas. But existence, consciousness, bliss and infinitude constitute His very essence. Besides, God, as Rāmānuja holds, has many other auspicious qualities such as mercy. He pervades the universe just as an individual soul pervades its body. It is due to His immanence in the physical world and the individual souls that there can be no duality in God. He is one. The universe is His body, so that all the diversities that there are in the world are contained in Him. God's relation with the universe is that of a substance with its adjuncts. But He, while being immanent in the universe, also transcends it.¹ For God is infinite and so much more than the universe.² He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe which is only an infinitesimal part of Him. The motive which prompts God to create a world is nothing else than sport (*lila*).⁴ It is in Vaikuṇṭha, His heavenly abode situate beyond this universe, that God lives in His glory,⁵ as the Supreme Person of exquisite beauty. Those who possess true knowledge of their own selves and those who practise devotion are granted communion with Him in Vaikuṇṭha. It is from there that God generally comes to protect the pious, to punish the wicked and to uplift righteousness.

Rāmānuja believed in one God. He was by no means a polytheist. Nor do his writings betray any trace of henotheism, according to which some one god or the other is supreme over the rest. He was not a deist either. Nor was he a pantheist; for while according to pantheism, there is no God apart from nature or the universe, Rāmānuja holds that God is not exhausted in the universe but transcends it. Rāmānuja was, strictly speaking, a theist, holding

the belief that there is one God who made this world and who governs it.

Rāmānuja's God is Viṣṇu. The word 'Viṣṇu' has several meanings such as fire, one of the Vasu-gods,⁶ one of the Āditya-gods.⁷ But the Viṣṇu of Rāmānuja is not one of them. Viṣṇu, as Rāmānuja holds, is the Deity who is invoked and extolled by Vaśiṣṭha and others in the Rgveda. Puruṣa, Nārāyaṇa and Brahman spoken of in the Vedic literature, and Bhagavān and Vāsudeva of the epics, the Purāṇas and the Āgamas are, for him, one and the same Supreme Being. These different names are held by Rāmānuja to be only synonyms of Viṣṇu.

The Vedic seers adored many gods—Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, Soma and so on. The ancient religion as revealed by the Vedas is, therefore, held by many to be poly-theistic. But the seers realized that the underlying principle on which the creation rests is one. 'Reality is one ; the sages call It differently.'⁸ They held that Reality is immanent in the creation and the term they used to denote It was Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu is one who pervades. The seers also applied the name 'Puruṣa' to Him, meaning by it one who permeates the world. The name 'Nārāyaṇa' has the same significance. The conception of an all-pervading Deity was thus quite familiar to the Vedic sages. The Rgveda has characterised Viṣṇu as beneficent, undesignable, protector of the world, protector of the embryos, innocuous, bountiful, generous, deliverer, innoxious, wide-paced, new, eternal, having a blissful spouse, helpful to mankind, friend of Indra, wish-fulfiller, young, brave, all-pervading, lord and creator. He is said to live far beyond this world, and to have sustained all the worlds alone.¹⁰

According to Macdonell, Viṣṇu 'occupies but a subordinate position in the Rgveda'.¹¹ He has arrived at this conclusion by observing that Viṣṇu is extolled in 'not more than five whole hymns and part of another'. But, while it is true that Viṣṇu has been less frequently invoked than some of the other gods of the Vedas, this does not detract from the influence which Viṣṇu exercised on the minds of the seers. Take the case of the Vedic eulogies of rivers. Sarasvatī should have been the most important of the rivers spoken of in the Vedas, if importance is measured in terms of the volume of praise she has received. She is lauded in three entire hymns, but this cannot, in any way, be detrimental to the greatness of Gaṅgā, although reference to her in the Rgveda is very meagre, she being mentioned directly only in one stanza. The reference to jñāna-

kānda is likewise much less than that to karma-kānda, in the Vedas ; and yet the former is usually taken to be higher than the latter. So the smallness of the number of hymns on Viṣṇu in the Rgveda should not, therefore, be interpreted as signifying this Deity's subordinate position.

A review of the Sun-theory

Viṣṇu seems, says Macdonell, to have been primarily conceived as the sun. In his opinion 'Viṣṇu's three steps refer to the course of the sun.'¹² The three steps, he says, mean, for most European scholars, the rising, culminating and setting of the sun. He adds that Aurṇavābha also favoured this 'purely naturalistic interpretation'. But the view which Aurṇavābha exactly held on this point is not clear. He opined, according to Yāska, that Viṣṇu strode on Samā-rohaṇa, Viṣṇu-pada and Gaya-śiras. Out of these three the Gayaśiras has been taken by some to mean the setting of the sun. Dr. Lakshman Sarup interprets it as the mountain of the setting sun. But this interpretation does not seem to be satisfactory. The Gayaśiras has no connection whatever with the setting of the sun. It is, on the contrary, a sacred place in Gaya. The Bhāgavata has recommended it as one of the sacred places of India where a religious aspirant should live.¹³ The Vāyu-purāṇa advises an offering of a pīṭa at the Gayaśiras,¹⁴ and has recorded the following legend to establish the sanctity of the place.

There was once a demon with a huge body, whose name was Gaya. Devoted to Viṣṇu, he performed an austerity on the Mount Kolāhala in order to get a boon from the Deity. Viṣṇu was pleased with the demon and granted him the boon. Thenceforward Gaya became so sacred that whosoever saw him went to Vaikunṭha. At this Yama's anxiety knew no bounds, and an assembly of the gods was convened to think out how they could help Yama in the normal discharge of his duties. The result was that the gods managed to put the demon under a huge slab of rock, so that he might not move about. God Viṣṇu, then, put His foot on the slab to fix it perfectly in its position. As a result, the Gaya-śiras was rendered sacred to the limit of a kroṣa, and Gaya with a radius of five kroṣas.¹⁵

The Gayaśiras referred to by Aurṇavābha seems to be the above-mentioned place within Gaya. The Viṣṇu-pada also, like the Gayaśiras, is a sacred spot bearing the footprint of Viṣṇu. The Viṣṇu-pada spoken of by Aurṇavābha may correspond to it. Investigation may perhaps reveal Samārohaṇa to be a third place similarly sacred. Is it

not the sacred Udyat,¹⁶ or Udayat hill in Gaya which, the Mahābhārata says, is worth visiting by pilgrims ? Samārohaṇa and Udyat are similar in meaning.

According to Dr. B. Barua, 'the Vedic allegory of the three strides of Viṣṇu as explained by Aurṇavābha and the Paurāṇic allegory of the upheaval of the granite hills of the Kolāhala chain by volcanic action lie at the back of the Gayā-māhātmya story of Gayāsura'¹⁷. He opines that 'viewed in astronomical perspective, the Holy Land of Gayā is to present a picture of a cosmographic chart of the heaven above with visible representations of its principal dwellers, the sun, the planets and the stars, and with a fanciful location of the milky way, the three stations of the sun in the sky during his daily course and the three stations of the sun during his annual course. The sun on the rising point (Samārohaṇa) is emblematic of childhood, the sun in meridian (Viṣṇupada) is emblematic of glorious youth, and the sun on the vanishing point (Gaya-sīras) is emblematic of old age or death.'¹⁸

Dr. Barua has thus tried to clothe Aurṇavābha's theory in philosophic garb, but the point why Gayāsīras has been interpreted as vanishing point or setting aspect of the sun still remains in dark. The Gaya-sīras of Aurṇavābha cannot mean, in the absence of any convincing proof, to be the mountain of the setting sun. In any case it does not seem plausible to hold, as some scholars do, that the Viṣṇupada and the Gayāsīras referred to by Aurṇavābha respectively mean the meridian and setting of the sun. In Yāska's Nighaṇṭu the word 'Gaya' occurs, in the list of synonyms of 'offspring', (2.2), 'wealth' (2.10) and 'house' (3.4); but not in that of 'mountain'. Rai Kṛṣṇa Dāsa has said, in his book on Indian Iconography (Bhāratīya Murti Kāla : Page 53), that worship of foot-prints is very old, and has referred to Viṣṇupada near Gayāsīras as mentioned by Yāska in the 8th Century B.C.

The 'parama pada' of Viṣṇu must be, according to the above view, the final step of the Deity. So if the Deity be identified with the sun, His third step would signify the setting of the sun. The 'parama pada' is said, on the contrary, to be always visible like an extensive eye' placed in the sky.¹⁹ The sun is not visible after it sets in the west, whereas the devotees are said always to discern 'parama pada' of Viṣṇu. Again the 'parama pada' of Viṣṇu is said, in the Rgveda, to have honey.²⁰ But we cannot trace any honey in the setting phase of the sun, the so-called final step of Viṣṇu.

The view that Viṣṇu's three steps refer to the course of the sun is not favoured by Macdonall also. He interprets the three steps after Śākapūṇi and Bergaigne, 'as the course of the solar deity through the three divisions of the universe'. In fact, there is hardly any reason for holding that these steps have anything to do with the sun. The Rgveda reveals that Viṣṇu 'traversed the earthly spaces for the sake of man in distress';²¹ 'He traversed the earth to give it to man for a dwelling'²² and 'He traversed the earthly spaces for wide-stepping existence'.²³ Oldenberg, therefore, seems to be right when he states that 'every definite trace of solar character is lacking in Viṣṇu, that he was from the beginning conceived only a traverser of wide space, and that no concrete natural conception corresponded to the three steps'.²⁴ The Vedic description about Viṣṇu's three steps indeed reminds one of the Divine immanence in the three 'lokas' referred to in the Gita (15.17).²⁵ Rāmānuja, therefore, holds that these three *lokas* are (a) matter, (b) embodied souls and (c) liberated souls.²⁶ That Viṣṇu's striding may properly be interpreted as His immanence in the universe is shown by a parallel reference to the striding of Puruṣa. Like the hymn of Viṣṇu the hymn of Puruṣa makes a mention about the latter's striding.²⁷

While enumerating the anthropomorphic traits of Viṣṇu, Macdonell has referred to 'the frequently mentioned strides which he takes, and his being a youth vast in body, who is no longer a child.' In this the learned scholar seems, however, to have missed one of the epithets applied to Viṣṇu, viz., *Sumaj-jāni*²⁸ meaning 'having a blissful spouse.'

Thus Viṣṇu cannot be the sun. He is creator of the sun. The creation of the sun by Viṣṇu, in association with Indra, is unambiguously stated in a hymn dedicated to Viṣṇu.²⁹ This position is supported by the *Puruṣa-sūkta*, a hymn traditionally recited in praise of Viṣṇu, which reveals that the sun was produced from the eye of Puruṣa.³⁰ Moreover, the orb of the sun is a huge heap of fire, so that no human being can think of residing there. Had Viṣṇu been identical with the sun, none would say :

'May I attain to that his well-loved dwelling,
Where men devoted to the gods are blessed :
In Viṣṇu's highest step—he is our Kinsman
Of mighty stride—there is a spring of nectar.'³¹

Another stanza expresses the similar human desire to go to the Deity's place.³²

Macdonnell has traced Viṣṇu's Sudarśana and also Garuḍa to the orb of the sun, the former on account of its round shape and the latter on account of its brilliance. But where, it may be asked, would he trace Viṣṇu's mace, sword, conch, bow and arrow? He has no definite answer. At one time he traces Viṣṇu Himself to the sun and at another he traces the Deity's disc and vehicle to the same.

To suit his purpose, Macdonell has derived the word 'Viṣṇu' from the root *viś* which he holds primarily to mean 'to be active'.³³ But this cannot be the meaning, for the root really means 'to pervade' 'to permeate', 'to enter',³⁴ which goes to prove that Viṣṇu is one who pervades the universe.

Indra's Friendship with Viṣṇu—An Instance of Euhemerism.

Many of the European orientalists have indeed devoted themselves to the study of the Vedas, the oldest extant document of Indian civilization. They have also translated and examined them. But owing to the vast remoteness of the period to which the Vedas belong, they are not unanimous as regards the Vedic age and the meanings of the myths occurring in the Vedas. Indra is one of the gods in the Vedic pantheon to have been eulogised by the sages. He waged a war against Vṛtra, to which the Vedas refer very frequently. This warfare has been regarded as a myth by the modern scholars who have made efforts to explain it by putting forward several theories of which the following is an outline.³⁵

With reference to the view held by Yāska, the great etymologist, some scholars have opined that Vṛtra is nothing but cloud, and Indra is no other than the god of rain who disperses it. Hence the theory is known as the 'Storm theory'.

According to others, Vṛtra is nocturnal darkness which Indra (the sun) puts an end to. This may be called the 'Dawn theory'.

The third is the 'Vernal theory' according to which Vṛtra is stated to be the cold winter which freezes water, and Indra is represented as the springtime when the frozen water is melted by the rays of the sun.

The fourth holds that Vṛtra and Indra are respectively the darkness of the long nights and the light of the long days lasting alternately for six months a year in the polar regions where the primitive Aryans are supposed to have lived in the hoary past.

The truth, however, seems to be that the Vedic mythology is euhemeristic, so that the gods described therein are real personages.

This view is based upon the historical school of the Vedic interpreters according to which the deities are not mere manifestations of natural phenomena. *Veda-vyāsa*, the well-known epic-writer,³⁵ delineated Vedic gods in details. His writings may be taken to be of the nature of exhaustive commentaries explaining all allusions and obscure meanings. *Vyāsa* is not, however, the first to start the historical school. Even *Yāska* mentions that according to the historians, *Vṛtra* is the son of *Tvaṣṭr*, a demon³⁶ whom the *Kauṣitakī Upaniṣad* describes as three-headed. Though *Yaska* seems to belong to the naturalistic school, yet he did not refrain from quoting, whenever necessary, the views of other schools current in his time. He may have had before him histories which date back even so far as the period of the³⁷ *Atharva-Veda* and *Śatapatha*.³⁸ Mention has been made of the *Itihāsa* and *Purāṇa* in the *Chandogya* too.³⁹

There is a passage about Indra in the *R̥gveda*, which is contradictory to the above naturalistic theories. It runs thus : 'O men, he is Indra who found out, in the fortieth year, Śambara dwelling in mountains and who killed the powerful, sleeping demon'.⁴⁰ The phrase 'in the 40th year' is worth consideration in this connection. No natural phenomenon e.g. storm, dawn, spring etc., can be said to occur after a lapse of forty years. Even the polar light appears and reappears after the lapse of six months. Now Indra had to fight his enemy, Śambara, for many years. Viṣṇu is Indra's friend,⁴¹ and it was, therefore, natural for him to help Indra. There are stray references to Viṣṇu's giving help to Indra during that prolonged war. As a matter of fact, Indra did beseech Viṣṇu for help,⁴² and the latter responded favourably to the former's request. They were united in their effort to destroy ninety and nine strong towns of Śambara.⁴³ Elsewhere Viṣṇu is said to have shaken ninety and four, which seems probably to refer to a penultimate state of warfare.⁴⁴ Instead of adding four and ninety together, Macdonell is inclined to multiply the two figures to get a number of three hundred and sixty which, he thinks, are the days of the year according to solar calculation.

Śambara was not, however, the only demon against whom Viṣṇu and Indra fought. They countered the deceitful feats of *Vṛṣa-sipra*⁴⁵ and killed hundreds and thousands of the soldiers of *Varcin*.⁴⁶ A person thus engaged in a war against enemies of one's friend should not be imagined to be a natural phenomenon, such as the sun or its like.

In fact, Rāmānuja's Viṣṇu is not the sun, but is sun-hued⁴⁷ and resplendent.⁴⁸ The sun is one of His *vibhūtis*, and it gets its illumination from Him.⁴⁹ His lustre is compared, in the *Gītā*, to that of thousands of suns.⁵⁰ The countless stars twinkling in the blue firmament constitute God's cosmic form (*viśva-rūpa*).⁵¹

A critique of the view that the cult of Viṣṇu was modelled on the cult of Indra.

According to Dr. Bhagabat Kumar Goswami, there was a stage in the Vedic civilization when Indra was regarded as the king of the gods. As time went on, continues Goswāmī, 'Viṣṇu or the all-pervading God came to be looked upon with greater favour in the matter of Divine kingship', and all the greatness of Indra and other gods was transferred to Viṣṇu. He states further that the hymns dedicated to Viṣṇu at a later stage were modelled on the hymns dedicated to Indra. Then he adds that the Paurāṇic names 'Gopēśa', 'Govinda' and 'Vrajapati' for krṣṇa, an incarnation of Viṣṇu, show the influence of the cult of Indra and that even Śri, the spouse of Viṣṇu, primarily belonged to Indra.⁵² As regards this view, the following observations may be made.

Indra's kingship is indeed in strict accord with the Indian tradition. But the lordship of Indra has its limitations. He is decidedly superior to the *gods*, but inferior to God in the Vedas. It cannot be said that the Vedas are devoid of the conception of one Supreme God and are confined to mere panegyrics to the gods. There are passages in the Vedas which express Indra's subordination and inferiority. The hymn on Man (*Puruṣa-sūkta*), for instance, clearly states that Indra emerged out of the mouth of *Puruṣa*⁵³, and tradition identifies the *Puruṣa* of this hymn with Viṣṇu.⁵⁴

The R̥gveda, like the other Vedas, is an anthology of hymns composed by various seers. Some sages praised Indra; some, Agni; some Varuṇa; some, Uṣas; some, Viṣṇu and so on. So if any one holds that the hymns on Viṣṇu were modelled on the hymns on Indra, there may be others to hold just the opposite view. Goswami has built his theory on the resemblance between only a few words respectively occurring in the hymns on Viṣṇu and Indra. But this is hardly convincing. It may equally be probable that the hymns on Indra were modelled on the hymns on Viṣṇu. The extant Vedic anthologies (*Śamhitās*) are said to have been brought into their present form and arrangement by Krṣṇa Dvaiḍāyana Vyāsa. Styles vary with individuals. Even contemporary people are likely to write

both in similar and dissimilar ways. They may also happen to use similar words or phrases even without copying one another.

Goswāmī's thesis that all the greatness of Indra and some of the important attributes of other gods were transferred to Viṣṇu when the latter was once raised to the highest position, does not seem to be correct. Viṣṇu's immanence in the universe is His own greatness. Goswāmī himself has interpreted the word 'Viṣṇu' as 'the pervading God'. So he should have thought that this greatness is Viṣṇu's own, and not transferred to him from any other god. As a matter of fact, no other god in the Vedic pantheon has this greatness. It is His immanence in the world that makes Viṣṇu the Supreme. It is the climax of excellence which no other god—not even Indra—is said to have possessed. It is immaterial that the immanent God is extolled only in five or six hymns. As regards the other important attributes of Viṣṇu, some of them are indeed common to, and shared by, more than one god. Qualities can indeed belong in common to more than one individual. Both a lotus and a rose are beautiful; and two poets, one contemplating the former and the other the latter will appreciate the beauty of the objects respectively contemplated by them. But this would not obviously be a case of transferring the beauty of one of the objects to the other. Viṣṇu is depicted in the Vedas as friend of Indra, and friends are likely to have at least some common qualities. Hence there is no question of any transfer. The same may be said of other attributes. Supposing, in agreement with Dr. Goswāmī, one holds that supremeness and other attributes are not, really, the intrinsic attributes of Viṣṇu, the question would arise as to what His own attributes are. Viṣṇu is extolled in about half a dozen hymns only. And if this small number of hymns be said to refer to His attributes which are, really, not His own but transferred to Him, He cannot be spoken as having any attribute at all. As a way out of this difficulty one may only suggest that Viṣṇu was a later creation of the sages who simply evolved a new deity to impose upon him the attributes belonging to the other gods. But this would be absolutely fanciful.

As regards the view that the epithets such as 'Gopeśa', 'Govinda', 'Vraja-pati', usually the epithets applied to Kṛṣṇa, came to be applied under the influence of the Indra cult, it may be observed that it is unwarranted in view of the fact that these epithets can directly be traced to the hymns on Viṣṇu. There are clear references both to the 'cows' and 'Vraja' in the hymns on Viṣṇu, No. 154

(Stanza VI)⁵⁵ and No. 156 (Stanza IV)⁵⁶ in the first book of the Rgveda.

The statement that Śrī originally belonged to Indra but was later claimed by Viṣṇu is equally unfounded. According to a Paurāṇic legend, Durvāsā once pronounced on Indra the curse that the latter's kingdom would lose prosperity, and consequently the chief of the gods would have to face adversity.⁵⁷ It was during that period that the demons attacked and defeated the gods. Thereupon the gods approached Brahmā who in his turn propitiated Viṣṇu for help.⁵⁸ Viṣṇu appeared and advised the gods to make a temporary treaty with the demons and with their help to churn nectar out of the ocean. Accordingly, the gods churned the milky ocean, and Śrī was one of the celestial 'gems' that came out of it.⁵⁹ Śrī assumed Her seat on the bosom of Viṣṇu, and bestowed Her favour on the gods and made them happy.⁶⁰ The churning finally resulted in the advent of Dhanvantari holding a jar of nectar. Viṣṇu managed to infatuate the demons and to distribute among the gods the nectar by drinking which they became invincible. After this, the gods overcame their enemies and regained the kingdom of paradise.⁶¹ This is in brief the legend on which Goswāmī has based his position. Indra had been prosperous before Durvāsā's curse fell on him. The curse undermined Indra's prosperity. This event has made Goswāmī believe that Śrī primarily belonged to Indra. But here he erroneously identifies Śrī meaning 'prosperity' with Śrī, the spouse of Viṣṇu. He is perhaps not aware that the spouse of Viṣṇu has been referred to even in one of the hymns (1.156.2) of the Rgveda. The word 'Sumaj-jāni' (one who has a blissful spouse) seems to have escaped his notice. Every student of Vedic literature knows that the Yajurveda has made a mention of Śrī and Lakṣmī as spouses of Viṣṇu. The name of Indra's queen is not Śrī. Śrī is universally mentioned both in the Vedic and the classical Sanskrit literature as Viṣṇu's spouse. According to the Paurāṇic tradition, Śrī is inseparable from Viṣṇu.⁶² She descends with Viṣṇu to this mundane order of the universe. She is represented at one time to have been born of Khyāti, the wife of Bhṛgu, and at another to have emerged from the milky ocean. It was she who appeared as Sītā and Rukmini when Viṣṇu descended in the forms of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa respectively. She has thus been, from the Vedic times to the age of the Purāṇas, associated with Viṣṇu and not with Indra as Goswami supposes.

A study of the Hercules Theory.

While the sun-theory and the Indra-theory are thus untenable, an equally untenable has been put forward by G.V.L. Raghava Rau

who on the basis of some astronomical data tends to identify Viṣṇu with the Hercules—Lyra system of the sky.⁶³ As mentioned by Edward Pococke in his 'India and Greece', Colebrooke and some other oriental scholars derived the Greek word Hercules from the Sanskrit word Hari-Kuleśa. Rau thinks that the description of Hercules as given by Aratus, a poet—astronomer of Greece, resembles the Paurāṇic description of Viṣṇu. Aratus's description is as follows :

'Near to the Dragon's head, in toilspent posture
 Revolves a phantom whose name none can tell
 Nor what he labours at ; they call him simply,
 The man upon his knees. His knees seem bent
 In desperate struggle, while from his shoulders
 His hands are high uplifted and out spread
 As far as he can stretch, his right footsole
 Is planted on the crest of the coiled Dragon.'

This has, really, a close resemblance with the description of the Purāṇas where Viṣṇu is said to be reposing on a hooded serpent in the milky ocean. But how can Rāmānuja's Viṣṇu be identified with any one or two particular constellations ? According to him, Viṣṇu is immanent in the entire universe containing so many constellations, all things, animate and inanimate, and yet transcending all that is.

The cult of Viṣṇu is the cult of Pañcarātra, Sāttvata and Bhāgavata.

As has already been said, Viṣṇu is traditionally adored with the recital of the hymn on Puruṣa. In the remote past man-sacrifice (puruṣa-medha) was performed with that hymn. But this sacrifice, really, involved no killing of life—human or animal ; only oblations were offered with clarified butter. The performance of the sacrifice occupied a duration of five nights. It was, therefore, called 'pañcarātra' or a five-night sacrifice which was a special religious rite of the devotees of Viṣṇu. As time went on, the sect of these devotees became known by the name of Pañcarātra. The worshippers did not indulge in the slaying of any living being, because purity (sattva-guṇa) was a predominant feature of their character. In fact, they came in course of time, to be known as *sattvavat*. The second *va* of this word was haplographically dropped and the abbreviated form *sattvat*, replaced the original one. The word 'sattvat' is used in the Śatapatha as well as the Aitareya, and the religion of these *sattvat* people came to be known, in latter periods, as the *sāttvata dharma*.

or the religion of the sattvat sect. It may be observed in this connection that Dr. Goswāmi's derivation of the term 'sāttvata' is objectionable. According to him, God is Sat-vat i.e., endowed with reality and 'those who have faith in such a one are sātvatas'. But the word *sat* is really an adjective meaning 'real' or 'existent', and so there is no need of adding to it the suffix *vat* which is added to nouns only. Moreover, Goswami adds the suffix *sya* to *sattvat* to get *Sattvata*, whereas the correct suffix to be added here should be *ā*, if we rely on the authority of Pāṇini 4.1.86.⁶⁴ It is, however, clear that the words 'pāñcarātra' and 'sāttvata', which are widely known to the Vaiṣṇavas, owe their origin to a sacrifice performed for the propitiation of Viṣṇu designed as Puruṣa. As regards the Sanskrit word 'puruṣa', though it signifies the individual soul, ultimately means God, because He is immanent in matter as well as the individual souls.

Viṣṇu possesses innumerable auspicious qualities of which six are termed as *bhaga*. One who possesses *bhaga* in its entirety is called *Bhagavān*, and since none but Viṣṇu possesses it, He alone is called *Bhagavān*. One who is devoted to *Bhagavān* is called *Bhāgavata*. This word also means the religious sect of those who are devoted to *Bhagavān*, that is, Viṣṇu.

Viṣṇu as one of the Trimūrti.

It might be asked, How can Viṣṇu who figures as only one of the trinity—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva—be the supreme God? The answer is simply this that these three gods are the three phases of one and the same God. Some of the purāṇas bear testimony to this. The Viṣṇu-purāṇa says: 'Janārdana, the adorable one, bears three epithets of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva in connection with the three functions of creation, sustenance and destruction of the cosmos respectively'⁶⁵. The Śiva-purāṇa likewise declares, 'Although I am in reality undifferentiated, I assume three appellations of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva while busy in creation, maintenance and dissolution of the world.'⁶⁶ The Bhāgavata similary states: 'Having penetrated my own māyā of three attributes, I assume three different names according as I create, maintain and dissolve the world.'⁶⁷

Those who adhere to the cult of Trimūrti hold that the Absolute becomes Iśvara when It is associated with the material constituents. For them Iśvara is God of popular belief, who has three phases. When associated predominantly with Sattva, He is called Viṣṇu; when associated predominantly with rajas, He is Brahmā; and when associated predominantly with tamas, He is Śiva. The

cult of Trimurti may have been in vogue for ages in India and influenced literature and the arts of painting and sculpture in this country. Bāṇa has begun, for instance, his famous poetical work, Kādambarī, with a prayer offered to God in these three phases.⁶⁸ It is doubtful, however, whether the cult ever had the support of any philosophical school of established repute.

The cult of Trimūrti and Advaita

Brahmā is not held to be of the same status as Viṣṇu and Śiva. According to Advaita, Brahmā has a position lower than that of Iśvara. This is clear from the designation 'Hiranyagarbha' which it has ascribed to the former.⁶⁹ That Brahmā is identical with Hiranyagarbha is certain.⁷⁰ Classical Sanskrit literature abounds in passages supporting this view. Māgha, for instance, calls Nārada 'son of Hiranyagarbha'.⁷¹ According to tradition also Nārada is an offspring of Brahmā.⁷² But the question why he has been given a lower status remains a riddle. The internal evidence in the Purāṇas shows that worship of Brahmā had become obsolete. The story about Śiva's curse that Brahmā would not be adored is too well known to be repeated.

As against the Trimurti doctrine which views Iśvara as associated with sattva, rajas and tamas, Advaita holds that the Absolute, in its association with Śuddha-sattva, becomes Iśvara.⁷³ Śuddha-sattva may mean either pure or preponderating sattva. But neither of the two meanings can lead to the view of God as identical with Trimurti; for the purity of sattva would allow no room for rajas and tamas which are as essential to the nature of Trimūrti as sattva. It may be noted in this connection that although later Advaitins have drawn distinction between Maya and Avidya, Śaṅkara recognises no such distinction. But even then they agreed with Śaṅkara that it is Maya and not Avidya that is God's adjunct and that Maya is śuddha-sattva. It, therefore, follows that 'The Trimurti' is not compatible with the Advaita conception of God as having for His adjunct that which is pure sattva.

Rāmānuja enters into subtle polemics, and the arguments put forward by him smack of sectarianism. He quotes from that portion of the Viṣṇu-purāṇa where Janārdana is represented as bearing the three epithets of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. The Ācārya then argues thus: The mention of Janārdana (another name of Viṣṇu) along with Brahmā and Śiva implies that He has become a member of the Trimurti of His own accord (icchā) and in sport (lila).⁷⁴ But Brahmā and Śiva according to him, are, like other gods, the vibhuti of Viṣṇu.⁷⁵

Hence Rāmānuja holds that Brahmā is but an individual soul, a Jīva, and in this he is supported by Manu-Smṛti which narrates Brahmā's birth thus: 'In the beginning the Lord created water and poured His energy thereon ; Brahmā was born there.'⁷⁶ 'The man created by Nārāyaṇa is called Brahma in the world.'⁷⁷ The Śvetāśvatara also states: 'In the beginning God creates Brahmā and verily gives him the Vedas.'⁷⁸ Rāmānuja argues therefrom that Brahmā is a created, finite, individual (Kṣetrajña).⁷⁹

As regards the scriptural texts which assign lordship to Rudra, Rāmānuja holds that they are to be explained in the spirit of sage Vāmadeva's utterances such as, 'I am manu, I am Surya, I am the learned sage Kakṣīvān.'⁸⁰ Prahlāda, adds Rāmānuja, also said, 'The infinite (Viṣṇu) being all-pervasive, I am He. All is from me. I am all. All is in me.'⁸¹ These bold utterances of Vāmadeva and Prahlāda sound as if both of them were almighty ; but according to Rāmānuja, they were not so. The word 'I' in the above citations refers, Rāmānuja says, to God ; and the speakers feel themselves to be at one with God, not because they are identical with God but because He indwells and permeates the individuals. Divine immanence does not necessarily mean the identity of God and the individual souls.

In the system of Rāmānuja, Viṣṇu is the Supreme Self who has all individual souls as His body. Such words as 'I' and 'you' point specifically to individual souls, though they may be construed as having references to the Supreme Self in view of the fact that God is their indwelling Soul.⁸² Just as an individual is the self of its body, so Brahman which Rāmānuja equates with Viṣṇu is the Self of all the individual selves. As the head of a Vaiṣṇava sect, Rāmānuja holds that Brahmā and Śiva are individuals like Indra ; so that they are not in themselves Supreme.⁸³ The Mahābhārata has recorded, he observes, a dialogue between Brahmā and Rudra where the former speaks thus to the latter : 'Viṣṇu is the inner ruler of you, me and all the other embodied beings.'⁸⁴ The acārya adds another quotation from the epic : 'Brahmā and Rudra, the best of the gods, have sprung from (Viṣṇu's) favour and wrath. Guided by Him they create and destroy (the universe respectively)'.⁸⁵ The descent of Viṣṇu into the trinity, Rāmānuja concludes finally, is due to His wish and sport and aims at the good to the world.⁸⁶

Venkāṭanātha has also made the following observations on the point at issue :⁸⁷

1. Viṣṇu alone is Supreme. It is wrong to say that He has divided Himself into Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

2. It would not be reasonable to gather from the above-mentioned text of the Viṣṇu-purāṇa that Janārdana is a deity different from Viṣṇu. To hold that the word 'Janārdana' stands for a mere conscious entity is not sound, because the word 'adorable' (Bhagavān) is associated with it.

3. That there should be three Gods is a self-contradictory proposition. The Supreme cannot be more than one. The scriptures also show that the Ruler of all is one.

4. It is futile to think that a being other than Viṣṇu is God, because the Vedas teach that Viṣṇu is the lord of all.

5. It is not also proper to hold that Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva become Gods by turn according as sattva, rajas and tamas come to preponderate in different Kalpas.

Venkaṭanātha's observations are thus in strict conformity with the view of Rāmānuja that Viṣṇu is the Supreme lord of all.

Viṣṇu, The Brahman of the Upaniṣads.

For Rāmānuja, Brahman round which upaniṣadic teachings centre is none else than Viṣṇu.⁸⁸ There are several doctrines or sciences (vidyās) in the upaniṣads. Some of them teach the rites for fulfilling mundane desires while others tell us about the means of realising God. The former are called Kāmyavidyās and the latter Brahma-vidyās. One who seeks liberation must take to the latter, and such an aspirant can achieve the desired end by following any one of the Brahma-vidyās. These vidyās are many. An account of some of the most popular among these with Rāmānuja's views thereon, is given below.

1. The Doctrine of Bliss (Ānandamaya-vidyā).

God is full of bliss.⁸⁹ Bliss has various gradations on planes—human and divine—but it finds its culmination in God. The Ānandamaya is not the individual soul, but the highest Self, the Self of the individual souls, according to Rāmānuja. The expression 'full of bliss' or 'abounding in bliss' implies the total absence of pain in God, as Rāmānuja argues. It is the blissful God that bestows bliss on the individual souls.⁹⁰

2. The Doctrine of the Imperishable (Akṣara-vidyā).

God is not gross, not fine, not short, not red, not unctuous, not shadowy, not dark, not airy, not spacious, not attached and so on.⁹¹

The idea of absence of grossness etc., says Rāmānuja, must be included in all meditations. The qualities such as non-grossness constitute God's essential nature. God is opposed to all evil, and Rāmānuja observes that we should deny to God those attributes which relate to the empirical world. God must therefore be thought of, in all meditations, as having bliss and other attributes distinguished by the absence of grossness and so on.⁹² It is under guidance of such imperishable God that the sun and the moon, the sky and the earth are maintained at their proper places, and the rivers run their courses in the east and the west.⁹³

3. The Doctrine of Infinitude (Bhuma-vidyā).

Infinitude is that on the attainment of which a devotee does not see, hear, and know anything else. It is below and above, before and after. It is all. Infinitude is bliss. It is also immortality. Rāmānuja says that infinity is an attribute of God who is immortal and blissful.⁹⁴

4. The Doctrine of Immanence (Antar-yāmi-vidyā).

God pervades the earth and yet is other than the earth ; the earth does not know Him ; and yet the earth is His body ; He controls the earth from within. Similarly He pervades all inanimate matter—water, fire, air and so on. The individual souls are also pervaded by Him. Rāmānuja says that it is only the Supreme Brahman which is the Self of all, rules over all and has all beings—animate and inanimate—as Its body.⁹⁵

5. The Doctrine of Honey (Madhu-vidyā).

God is the lord, the king of all beings. All the elements, gods, worlds, sense-organs, and individual souls are fixed in Him just as spokes are fixed in the navel and the rim of a wheel. God is present everywhere. There is nothing wherein He does not exist. He is devoid of priority and posteriority and there is nothing internal and external to Him. He is omniscient. This is the essence (madhu) worth knowing.⁹⁶

6. The Doctrine preached to Upakosala (Upakosala-vidyā).

God is life, bliss and infinity. He possesses all auspicious attributes and bestows upon devotees what is good. He is resplendent.⁹⁷

7. The Doctrine of the Small (Dahara-vidyā).

The doctrine is named after the word 'small (dahara)', used as an adjective for the heart. The body of a devotee is a city within which there is a small house viz. heart wherein God lives. According

to Rāmānuja, one is to seek in God His negative and positive attributes.⁹⁸ God is free from evil, old age, death, grief, hunger and thirst. This is the negative approach. Positively speaking, His wishes and purposes are good, true and infallible. God in the heart is the same as He who is the support of the entire universe.

8. The Doctrine of One within the Sun (*Antarāditya-vidyā*).

The golden person who is seen within the sun has golden hair and is of golden hue from head to foot. His eyes are like a lotus blooming under the sun's rays. His name is Above (Ut), for He is above all evil. The form mentioned here is not a material one, says Rāmānuja, and he adds that it is God's essential (*svabhāvika*) form which He individualises in a human or divine shape in consideration of the nature and quality of the devotion of his worshippers.¹⁰⁰

9. The Doctrine of the Five Fires (*Pāñcāgni-vidyā*).

If a person performs sacrifices and other charitable deeds in his life-time, his soul will ascend along the path of paradise, but will eventually return from there to this world of action. When such a soul leaves a gross body, the sense-organs accompany it; and since the departing soul and the sense-organs require a sort of support at that time, the subtle elements also go with it. The doctrine of the 'five fires' tells us how such an individual soul is reborn. The sages explained the process of transmigration in terms of five oblations. The subtle body associated with the individual soul is offered as an oblation to the fires of

- (a) yonder region (*para loka*),
- (b) clouds,
- (c) earth,
- (d) man, and
- (e) woman

in order that it can eventually be born as a child. These stages of 'five fires' are not applicable in the case of germinating plants such as the rose plant, the sweat-born creatures as the louse, and the oviparous beings such as the sparrow. These things get their gross bodies, for experiencing pleasure and pain, in a lesser number of 'fires'. Even in the case of human beings, we find exceptions. Drona, Draupadi and Dhṛṣṭadyumna, for instance, were not born of mothers, thus escaping the fifth 'fire'.¹⁰¹ One who knows the doctrine of 'five fires', Rāmānuja says, attains God and does not return to this world.¹⁰²

10. The Doctrine preached by Śāṅdilya (*Sāṅdilya—vidyā*).

One should quietly meditate that all this is God who is the cause of the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the universe.

According to Rāmānuja, God can be apprehended only by those whose minds are pure. He is the support and controller of individual souls. He possesses a non-material, auspicious and bright form. His resolve is true, and His nature is as pure as akāśa. The entire world is His work. To Him belong all pure objects of enjoyment such as excellent odours and tastes. Being in possession of all lordly powers, and there being nothing to be attained by Him, He abides in perfect silence.¹⁰²

11. The Doctrine of Communion (Paryāṅka-vidyā).

Those who mediate upon God ascend along the path of light. Having attained God, they enjoy His communion for ever. Rāmānuja adds that Divine communion is attained by those also who know the true nature of their own selves.

References

1. अत्यतिष्ठद्वाहृगुलम् (ऋग्वेदः १०. ६०. १)
2. अतो ज्यायांश्च पूरुषः (ऋग्वेदः १०. ६०. ३)
3. (अ) यस्याऽयुताऽयुतांशांशो विश्वशक्तिरियं स्थिता (विष्णुपुराणम्)
(आ) एवं स्वल्पाल्पांशेन तु सर्वाश्चयंभयं नानारूपं जगत् तदन्तरात्मतया प्रविश्य (वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् १३१)
4. विविध विचित्र-चिदचिन्मत्त्व-जगत्सर्गे लीलैव केवलं प्रयोजनम् । ... ब्रह्मणः स्व-संकल्पमात्रावक्तुस-जगत्जन्मस्तिष्ठितिवंसादेल्लीलैव प्रयोजनमिति निरवच्यम् ॥ (श्रीभाष्यम् २. १. ३३)
5. इमां विष्णुएतिमां प्रकृतिमतिक्रम्य स्थिते स्थाने क्षयन्तं वसन्तमित्यर्थः (वेदार्थ-संग्रहः पृष्ठम् २३६)
6. धरो ध्रुवश्च सोमश्च विष्णुश्चैवानिलो नलः
प्रत्यूषश्च प्रभासश्च वसवोऽष्टौ क्रमात् स्मृताः ।
7. विष्णुयम् विवस्वन्तोशुमान्पर्जन्य इत्यविष्णुणेन्द्रधातुभित्रा: पूषा त्वष्टा भगः परः ।
8. एकं सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति (ऋग्वेदः १. १६४. ४६)
9. क्षयन्तमस्य रजसः पराके (ऋग्वेदः ७. १००. ५)
10. य उ विधातु पृथिवीमुत्तद्यामेको दाधार भुवनानि विश्वा (ऋग्वेदः १. १५४. ४)
11. Vedic Mythology by Macdonell, Page 37.
12. Vedic Mythology by Macdonell, Page 38.
13. सरांसि पुष्करादीनि क्षेत्राण्यहर्वितान्युत
कुरुक्षेत्रं गयशिरः प्रयागः पुलहाश्रमः

एते पुण्यतमा देशा हरेरचार्तिताश्च ये
एतान्देशान् निषेवेत श्रेयस्कामो ह्यभीक्षणशः (भागवतम् ७. १४. ३०)

14. पिंडं दद्याद् गयशिरे (वायुपुराणम्)
15. पंचक्रोशं गयाक्षेत्रं क्रोशमेकं गयाशिरः (शब्दार्थ-चिन्तामणावृद्धतं वायुपुराणीयं गया-माहात्म्यम्)
16. उद्यन्तं च ततो गच्छेत् पर्वतं गीतनादितम्
सावित्र्यास्तु पदं तत्र दृश्यते भरतर्थंभ (महाभारत वनपर्वं ८४, ६३)
17. *Gayā and Buddha Gayā* by Dr. B. Barua, Vol. I, Book I, Calcutta.
1934 : Page 56.
18. *Ibid* Page 54.
19. तद्विष्णोः परमं पदं सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः । दिवीव चक्षुराततम्
(ऋग्वेदः १. २२. २०)

20. विष्णोः पदे परमे मध्व उत्सः (ऋग्वेदः १. १५४. ५)
21. यो रजांसि विममे पार्थिवानि त्रिश्चद् विष्णुमनवे वाधिताय (आग्नेदः ६. ४६. १३)
22. वि चक्रमे पूर्णिमी भेष एतां क्षेत्राय विष्णु मनुषे दशस्यन् (ऋग्वेदः ७. १००. ४)
23. यः पार्थिवानि त्रिभिरिदि गामभिक्लिष्टोरुगायाय जीवसे (ऋग्वेदः १. ५५. ४)
24. *Vedic Mythology*, page 39.
25. यो लोकवयमाविश्य विभृत्यव्यय ईश्वरः (गीता १५. १७)
26. अचेतनं, तत्संसृष्टचेतनो, मुक्तश्चेति प्रमाणावगम्यमेतत् त्रयं य आत्मतयाऽविश्य विभर्ति (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १५. १७)
27. ततो विष्वद् व्यक्तामत् (ऋग्वेदः १०. ६०. ४)
28. यः पूर्वायि वेषसे नवीयसे सुमज्जानये विष्णुवे ददाशति (ऋग्वेदः १. १५६. २)
29. जनयन्ता सूर्यंमुषासमग्निम् (ऋग्वेदः ७. ६६. ४)
30. चक्षोः सूर्यो अजायत (ऋग्वेदः १०. ६०.)
31. तदस्य प्रियमभि पायो अश्यां नरो यत्र देवयवो मदन्ति
उरुक्मस्य स हि बन्धुरित्या विष्णोः पदे परमे मध्व उत्सः (ऋग्वेदः १. १५४. ५)
32. ता वां वास्तुन्युश्मसि गमध्यै (ऋग्वेदः १. १५४. ६)
33. *Vedic Mythology*, Page 39.
34. (अ) विष्णु व्यासो ज्ञुहोत्यादिः
(आ) विषा प्रवेशने तुदादिः
35. *Ghate's Lectures on Rigveda* by Dr. V. S. Sukthankar-Poona-1926.
Pages 137-140.
36. (अ) तरको वृत्रः ? त्वाष्ट्रोमुर इत्यैतिहासिकाः (निरुक्तम्)
(आ) त्रिशीर्षाणि त्वाष्ट्रमहनम् (कौशीतकी ३. १)
37. पुराणं यजुषा सह (अथर्ववेदः ११. ७. २४)
38. किंचित्पुराणमाचक्षीत (शतपथम् १३. ४. ३. १३)
39. इतिहासपुराणं पंचमं वेदानां वेदम् (छान्दोग्य ११. ५. ७६)

40. यः शंबरं पवंतेषु क्षियन्तं चत्वारिंश्यां यारद्यन्विन्दत्
शोजायमानं यो अर्हि जघान दानुं शयानं स जनास इन्द्रः (ऋग्वेदः २. १२. ११)

41. इन्द्रस्य युज्यः सखा (ऋग्वेदः १. २२. १६)

42. अथाबीद् वृत्रमिन्द्रो हनिष्यन्तस्त्वे विष्णो वितरं विक्रमस्व (ऋग्वेदः ४. १८. ११)

43. इन्द्राविष्णू द्वितीयाः शंबरस्य नव पुरो नवर्ति च इन्द्रिष्टम् (ऋग्वेदः ७. ६६. ५)

44. चतुर्भिः साकं नवर्ति च नामभिश्चकं न वृत्तं व्यतीर्वीरिपत् (ऋग्वेदः १. १५५. ६)

45. दासस्य चिद् वृषशिप्रस्य माया जघनतुन्नरा पृतनाज्येषु (ऋग्वेदः ७. ६६. ४)

46. शतं वर्चिनः सहकं च साकं हृषो अप्रत्यसुरस्य वीरान् (ऋग्वेदः ७. ६६. ५)

47. आदित्यवरणं तमसः परस्तात् (शुक्लयजुर्वेदः, ३१. १८)

48. (अ) विद्युतः पुरुषादिवि (शुक्लयजुर्वेदः ३२. २)

(आ) विद्युद्दण्डित्युपायादित्यर्थः (वेदार्थसंग्रहः, पृष्ठम् २३२)

49. (अ) यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद् भासयतेखिलम्
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाम्नो तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् (गीता १५-१२)

(आ) अखिलस्य जगतो भासकमेतेषामादित्यादीनां यत्तेजस्तन्मदीयं तेजस्तैरस्तैराराधितेन मया तेज्यो दत्तमिति विद्धि । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १५-१२)

50. दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेष्युगपदुत्थिता
यदि भाः सहशी सा स्याद् भासस्तस्य महात्मनः । (गीता ११. १२)

51. नक्षत्राणि रूपम् (यजुर्वेदः ३१. २२)

52. The Bhakti Cult in Ancient India By Dr. Bhagabat Kumar Goswami, Calcutta, 1922. Page 103.

53. मुखादिन्द्रिश्चामिनिश्च प्राणाद्वायुरजायत (ऋग्वेदः १०. ६०. १३)

54. (अ) ब्रह्मा तदुपधार्याथ सह देवस्तया सह
जगाम सत्विनयनस्तीरं क्षीरपयोनिधेः
तत्र गत्वा जगन्नाथं देवदेवं वृषाकपिम्
पुरुषं पुरुषं-सुक्तेन उपतस्ये समाहितः (भागवतम् १०. १. १६, २०)

(आ) आथयाऽवाहयेदेवमुच्चा तु पुरुषोत्तमम्-इत्यादि (माध्यन्दिन-वाजसनेयात्मिक उद्दृता हृहत्पाराशार-संहिता)

55. यत्र गावो भूरिश्रुंगा अयासः (ऋग्वेदः १. १५६. ४)

56. द्रजं च विष्णुः सखिं अपोगुणं (ऋग्वेदः १. १५६. ४)

57. मया दत्तामिमां मालां यस्मान्न बहु मन्यते त्रैलोक्य-श्रीरतो मूढ विनाशमुपयास्यसि (विष्णुपुराणम् १. ६. १४)

58. स गत्वा त्रिदशैः सर्वैः समवेतः पितामहः तुष्टाव वामिभरिष्टाभिः परावरपर्ति हरिम् (विष्णुपुराणम् १. ६. ३६)

59. ततः स्फुरत्कान्तिमती विकासिकमले स्थिता श्रीदेवी पयसस्तस्मादुदृता धृतपंकजा (विष्णुपुराणम् १. ६. १००)

60.	दिव्यमाल्यास्वरधरा स्नाता भूषणमूषिता पश्यतां सर्वदेवानां ययौ वक्षस्थलं हरे: तया विलोकिता देवा हरिवक्षस्यलस्या लक्ष्म्या मैत्रेय सहसा परां निर्वृतिमागताः ॥	(विष्णुपुराणम् १. ६. १०५-६)
61.	त्रैलोक्यं च विद्या ज्ञानं ब्रह्मव द्विजसत्तम वाक्शब्दं विद्वश्वेष्ठः पुनः श्रीमानजायत ॥	(विष्णुपुराणम् १. ६. ११५)
62.	अनपायिनी भगवती श्रीः साकादात्मनो हरे: (भागवतम् १२. ११. २०)	
63.	Scriptures of the Heavens by G. V. Raghava Rau:	Page 67 to 73.
64. (अ)	उत्सादिभ्योऽत्	(अष्टाद्यायी ४. १. ८६)
	(आ) उत्सादि-उद्दापानं सत्वत् कुरु पंचान्वां इत्युत्सादिः	(गणपाठे चतुर्थोऽध्यायः)
65.	सूर्यिस्थित्यन्तकरणी ब्रह्मविष्णुशिवाभिधाम् स संज्ञां याति भगवानेक एव जनार्दनः ।	(विष्णुपुराणम्)
66.	विद्वा भिन्नो ह्यहं विष्णो ब्रह्मविष्णुहरास्यमा सगंरक्षालयगुणैर्निष्कलोऽयं सदा हरे ।	(शिवपुराणम्)
67.	आत्ममायां समाविश्य सोऽहं गुणमयी द्विज सजन् रक्षन् हरन् विद्वं दद्वे संज्ञां क्रियोचिताम् ।	(भागवतम्)
68.	रजोज्जुवे जन्मनि सत्त्ववृत्तये स्थितौ प्रजानां प्रलये तमस्स्पृये अजाय सर्वस्थितिनाशहेतवे त्रयीमयाय त्रिगुणात्मने नमः ।	(कादम्बरी मंगलाचरणम्)
69.	स्थूल जागरित व्यष्टि समष्टि सूक्ष्म स्वप्न तैजस विश्व विराट् कारण सुविति प्राज्ञ हिरण्यगम्भीर्य ईश्वर	
70.	'Such epithets as Prajāpati and Brahmā are also included'. (Vedānta-sara: Page 58)	
71.	हिरण्यगर्भाङ्गभ्रुवं मुनिं हरिः	(शिशुपालवधम् ११)
72.	उत्सङ्गानारदो जग्ने दक्षोऽग्नुष्ठात्स्वयम्भ्रुवः	(भागवतम् ३. १२. २३)
73.	सत्त्वशुद्ध्यविशुद्धम्यां मायाऽविद्ये च ते मते माया-विम्बो वशीकृत्य तां स्यात् सर्वज्ञ ईश्वरः ।	(पंचदशी-तत्त्वविवेक प्रकरणम् १)
74.	विभूतिमत एव स्वेच्छया लीलार्थं विभूत्यन्तर्भाव उच्यते । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पठम् १६७)	

75. (ग्र) ब्रह्मशिवयोरपीन्द्रादि-समानाकारतया तद्विभूतित्वं च प्रतिपादितम् ।
(वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठ १६७)

(ग्रा) तयोरिन्द्रादि-नुल्यतया तद्विभूतित्व-प्रतिपादनात् ।
(वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १७७)

76. अप एव ससर्जाऽदौ तामु वीर्यमवासुजद्
तदण्डमभवद्वैम् सहस्रांशु-समप्रभम्
तस्मिन्ज्ञे स्वयं ब्रह्मा सर्वलोकपितामहः । (मनुस्मृतिः १. ८. ६)

77. तद्विसृष्टः स पुरुषो लोके ब्रह्मेर्ति कीर्त्यते (मनुस्मृतिः १. ११)

78. यो ब्रह्माण्डं विदधाति पूर्वं
यो वै वेदांश्च प्रहिणोति तस्मै (इवेताश्वतरः)

79. ब्रह्मणो जन्मश्ववणात्तस्य क्षेत्रज्ञत्वमेवावगम्यते
(वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् २०२)

(ग्रा) हिरण्यगर्भादीनां.....क्षेत्रज्ञत्वं निश्चीयते

(इ) ब्रह्मणोऽपि सूक्ष्यत्वेन शास्त्रवद्यत्वेन च क्षेत्रज्ञत्वं गम्यते ।
(वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १५७)

80. (ग्र) यत्पुनरथवंशिरसि रुद्रेण स्वसर्वेश्वर्यं प्रपञ्चितं तत् "सोन्तरादन्तरं प्राविशत्" इति परमात्मप्रवेशाद्युक्तमिति श्रुत्यैव व्यक्तम् । शास्त्रदृष्ट्या तूपदेशो बामदेववदिति सूक्तकारेणावमादीनामर्थः प्रतिपादितः ।
(वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १८४)

81. सर्वंगत्वादनन्तस्य स एवाहमिति स्थितः
मत्तः सर्वमहं सर्वं मयि सर्वं सनातने (विष्णुपुराणम् १. १६. ५८)

82. (ग्र) जीवात्मवाचिनामहन्त्वमादिशब्दानां परमात्मन्येव पर्यंवसानम्
(ग्रा) परस्य ब्रह्मणः सर्वान्तरात्मत्वम्, सर्वस्य तच्छ्रीरत्वम्, शरीरवाचिनां शब्दानां शरीरिणि पर्यंवसानम् (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. ३१)

83. केवल-ब्रह्मशिवयोनं परतत्त्वप्रसंगः (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १७७)

84. महाभारते च ब्रह्मसूदसंवादे ब्रह्मा रुद्रं प्रत्याहं 'तवान्तरात्मा मम च ये चान्ये देहिसंजिताः' इति । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १८६)

85. एती द्वौ विवृध-शृष्टौ प्रसादकोषजो स्मृतौ
तदादशितपन्थानो सृष्टि-संहार-कारको (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १८६)

86. भगवतः परब्रह्मभूतस्य बासुदेवस्य निखिलजगदुपकाराय स्वेच्छया स्वेनैव रुपेण देवादिश्ववतारः । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् ११६)

87. एकं त्रिधा विभक्तं, त्रितयसमधिकं तत्त्वमीशास्त्रयस्ते, विष्णवन्या मूर्ति रीष्टे, प्रभवननियमः कल्पभेदात् ब्रयाणाम्, इन्द्रादीनामिव स्यान्निज-सुकृतवशादीप्त्व-राणां प्रवाहः, स्यादेकस्येवरत्वं प्रतिफलनवदित्यादि चैवं परास्तम् ॥
(तत्त्वमुक्ताकलापः ३. १४)

88. (ग्र) श्रुतिशिरसि विदीन्ते ब्रह्मणि श्रीनिवासे (श्रीभाष्यमंगलम्)
(ग्रा) परमात्मा परब्रह्म नारायणः (वै० सं० पृष्ठम् २४६)
(इ) परंब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तमो नारायणः (गीताभाष्यभूमिकायां रामानुजः)

89. तस्माद्वा एतस्माद् विज्ञानमयादन्योऽन्तर आत्माऽऽनन्दमयः
(तेत्तिरीय २. ५)

90. स एव जीवानानन्दयतीति जीवानामानन्द-हेतुर्य व्यपदिश्यते ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. १५)

91. (अ) स होवाचैतदक्षरं गार्गि आहुरणा अभिवदन्त्यस्थूलमनरण
(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद् ३. ८. ८)
(आ) यत् तददेश्यम्.....
(मुण्डकोपनिषद् १. १. ६)

92. हेयप्रत्यनीको ह्यानन्दादिग्रन्थाणोऽसाधारणं रूपम् । अक्षर-ब्रह्मसम्बन्धिनीना
मस्थूलत्वादिधियां सर्वंब्रह्मविद्यासु अवरोधः संग्रहणम् ॥
(श्रीभाष्यम् ३. ३. ३३)

93. एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ विधूतौ तिष्ठतः आवापृच्छिव्यो
विधूतौ तिष्ठतः,—प्राच्यो नद्यः स्यन्दनते इवेतेभ्यः पर्वतेभ्यः प्रतीच्योऽन्याः
(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद् ३. ८. ६)

94. (अ) यो वै भूमा तदमृतम्
(आनन्दोग्योपनिषद् ७. २३. १)
(आ) यो वै भूमा तत्सुखम्
(आनन्दोग्योपनिषद् ७. २३. १)
(इ) भूमा परं ब्रह्म
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. ३. ७)

95. (अ) य आत्मनि तिष्ठन् इत्यादि
(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद् ३. ७. २२)
(आ) परस्यैव ब्रह्मणः सर्वात्मत्वं सर्वंशरीरकत्वं सर्वनियन्त्रत्वं च प्रतिपाद्यते
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. २. १६)

96. अयमात्मा सर्वोऽं भूतानां मधु इत्यादि
(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद् २. ५. १४)

97. सर्वकल्याणगुणाश्रयत्वं सत्यसंकल्पत्वं वा संयद्वामत्वम् । वामनीत्वं स्वाश्रितेषु
शोभन-प्रापकत्वम् । भामनीत्वं सर्वलोकव्याप्तदीप्तिमद्-विग्रहयुक्तत्वम् ।
(आनन्दोग्योपनिषदि रंगरामानुज-टीका ४. १५. २)

98. दहराकाशः परं ब्रह्म, तदन्तर्वर्ति चापहृतपाप्मत्वादि काम्यगुणजातम्, तदुभय-
मन्वेष्टुव्यं विजिज्ञासितव्यम्
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. ३. १३)

99. तस्योदिति नाम, स एव सर्वेभ्यः पापमभ्य उदितः
(आनन्दोग्योपनिषद् १. ६. ६)

100. तदिदं स्वाभाविकमेव रूपमित्यादि
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. २१)

101. (अ) पुण्यकर्मणामपि केषांचित् पंचमाहृत्यनपेक्षया देहारम्भो लोके स्मर्यते
द्वोपदीधृष्ट्युम्न-प्रभूतीनाम्
(श्रीभाष्यम् ३. १. ११)
(आ) द्वोणघृष्ट्युम्न- प्रभूतीनां सीताद्वोपदी-प्रभूतीनां चाऽयोनिजत्वम्
(शंकर भाष्यम् ३. १. ११)

102. पंचानिविदोऽप्यचिरादिना गतिश्रवणात्, अचिरादिना गतस्य ब्रह्मप्राप्य-
पुनरावृत्तिश्रवणाच्च
(श्रीभाष्यम् ४. ३. १४)

103. अवाकी अनादरः, परिपूर्णेऽवर्यत्वाद् ब्रह्मादिस्तम्बपर्यन्तं निखिलं जगत् तुर्गी-
कृत्य जोषमासीनः
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. २. २)

104. स आगच्छत्यभितीजसं पर्यंकम्....., तस्मिन् ब्रह्मास्ते
(कोषीतकी १. ५)

CHAPTER IV

GOD AND THE WORLD

God's immanence in matter and the finite souls—The views of Lokācarya and Śrinivāsadasa—The relation between God and the world— Divine immanence evident from certain names applied to God : Viṣṇu, Śipiviṣṭa, Puruṣa, Nārāyaṇa and Viṣnudeva.

The universe comes out of the Supreme and again, after a fixed period, returns to Him. To explain the nature of the evolution and dissolution of the universe, the analogy of a spider has been offered in the Mundaka upaniṣad, which Rāmānuja made use of with great advantage.¹ A spider evolves the web out of its body, maintains it for some time and then reabsorbs the same into its body. God is like a spider and the universe, like a web. The relation between the spider and its web is analogous to that which subsists between God and the universe. One might employ another analogy with reference to the chameleon with its varying colours. The change of its colours takes place in its body, while in its soul there is no change. Similarly all the changes in the universe take place in its exterior but not in its interior essence.

God pervades the universe in both its phases—chaos and cosmos. He also pervades all kinds of souls whether bound or emancipated or eternal. The cause and the effect are identical ; so is God in His causal and effectual states. On this point, Rāmānuja may have based himself mainly on the concept of the Antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad which states ; 'God dwells in the earth ; is within the earth ; the earth does not know Him ; the earth is His body ; and He rules within'. Of course, it is not the earth only that constitutes God's body, but many other things such as fire, sky, air, etc. God's relation with the individual soul is the same as that of the latter with its body. Arjuna said to Kṛṣṇa 'You enter into all things as their soul. You are therefore the All,'² 'You are the Soul of all the entities, the intelligent and the non-intelligent.'³

It is not difficult to understand how God can be immanent in the material world. Instances like that of fire in an iron rod may explain how this may be so. But it is not easy to understand how

God is immanent in the individual soul. Rāmānuja here cares little for logic and builds up his position on the foundation of scriptural testimony. The scriptural texts like Mādhyandina recension of the Br̥hadāraṇyaka say : 'The Deity dwells in a soul, is within a soul, the soul does not know Him, the soul is His body, He rules the soul within'.⁴ Hence Rāmānuja holds that the relation between God and the souls must be the same as that which exists between God and matter.

Rāmānuja says in the *Vedārthasaṅgraha* that there is a flame in the central space of the lotus-shaped heart of man, wherein the Deity resides. The flame is yellow ; and the Deity, blue. The flame therefore looks like lightning which has, as it were, accommodated in itself a blue cloud resembling the Deity in colour.⁵ Rāmānuja took this idea from a passage of the *Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣat* (9.12) which runs thus : 'Nila-toyada-madhyasthā vidyul-lekheva bhāsvarā'. Dr. Radhakrishnan, while explaining this text, writes, 'The God in man is like a flash of lightning in the heart of a blue cloud'.⁶ But the expression 'nila-toyada-madhyasthā' is a compound which may be construed either as determinate (*tatpuruṣa*) or attributive (*bahubrihi*). Rāmānuja regarded it not as a determinate but as an attributive compound, as is clear from his explanatory phrase. The *Tatparya-candrikā*, a commentary on the *Ācārya*'s work, also supports the view, arguing that Rāmānuja's interpretation is in harmony with the Vedic grammar according to which the word 'nila-toyada' can be put before 'madhyastha'.⁷ Rāmānuja likens the Deity to a blue cloud encircled by lightning on all sides. Rāmānuja perhaps meant that colour of the Deity immanent in man is like that of a cloud and the lustre emanating from His person resembles the lightning in colour. Rāmānuja's explanation presupposes a particular shape of God immanent in man. The author of the *Artha-pañcaka* says that God residing in man's heart has a form and while residing in the universe of matter He is shapeless.⁸ But the author of *Yatindramatadipikā* further holds that God is pervasive not only in His essence and attributes but in His form also.⁹

A physical body is an adjunct to an individual soul ; similarly the entire physical universe and individual souls are an adjunct to God, the Supreme Soul. God is non-dual no doubt, but He is qualified inasmuch as He has this universe as an attribute. The universe being but adjectively related to God, His non-dual nature remains unaffected.

The world as an attribute exists not for itself but for the Deity. The world is *śesa* (subsidiary) and the Deity, *śeṣī* (principal). *Śesa* is a thing which exists for another, and that for which it exists is called *Śeṣī*. This is the view of the followers of *Mīmāṃsā*.¹⁰ The Sanskrit grammarians, however, say that *Śesa* is an object possessed, whereas the possessor is *śeṣī* (*Vide* Bhattoji Dikṣita on *Pāṇini* 2.3.50).¹¹ The universe and the Deity are, in other words, of the same predication (*Samānādhikarāṇya*¹²) in such phrases as 'Verily all this is God'.¹³ Since the Deity is the Soul of the universe and of every object therein, each and every substantive bears a reference to Him.

The Essence of Rāmānuja's Teaching

Rāmānuja himself was rather indifferent as to how his philosophical position should be entitled. What he laid stress on was the correct understanding of the doctrine taught in the *Vedas*, which, in his view, comprises the following essential points :—

- (a) The 'non-duality' or 'non-difference' of the ultimate Reality.¹⁴ This is expressed in Rāmānuja's view that there is one Supreme Being of whom the entire universe is the body.
- (b) 'Difference cum non-difference.'¹⁵ This is meant by him in so far as he holds that the one is many only through its modes.
- (c) Duality of difference.¹⁶ This is conveyed by his doctrine that matter, individual souls and God are essentially different from, and hence irreducible to, one another.

To cover all these three different aspects of Rāmānuja's theory of reality, his followers have given it the name of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. But it cannot be definitely determined who it was that first used this name. The very word *Viśiṣṭādvaita* implies non-dualism, while the name of a treatise such as *Tattva-traya* suggests dualism.

Rāmānuja did not claim to have propounded a new theory of reality of his own. What he did was simply to organise the scattered bits of truth embodied in the ancient religio-philosophical literature of India. Although he does not claim any credit even for this, yet there is no gainsaying the fact that he rendered valuable service to the philosophic thought of India by preaching his views the importance of which cannot be under-rated.

Not only the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads* but the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, the *Purāṇas* and the *Pāñcarātra* also yield much information about the doctrine of the immanence of God in man and nature. The *Taittiriya* declares, for instance, that God created the universe and

entered it afterwards.¹⁷ The *Isa* upaniṣad likewise states that the universe is enveloped by the Deity on all sides.¹⁸ The Śvetāsvatara proclaims that the Deity is immanent in the world as fire is in the burning wood, and that the world is ever pervaded by Him.¹⁹ The Upaniṣads thus clearly suggest that God pervades the world as its Soul. The Rāmāyaṇa tells the same truth. At the conclusion of the war of Lāṅkā, Brahmā eulogised Rāma by saying that the whole universe is His (Rāma's) body.²⁰ This obviously means that God pervades the world as its Soul. Similarly the *Gitā* says, 'Entering into the earth I support all creatures with my energy'.²¹ The Viṣṇupurāṇa says, 'This whole universe, moveable and stationary, is pervaded O Mother Lakṣmī, by you and Viṣṇu'.²² The Jayākhyā Samhitā says, 'The Deity pervades the whole universe; and being different from the latter, remains as non-different just as the fire resides in an iron-ball'.²³ The Pāñcaratra has thus suggested an interesting analogy of the fire pervading a rod of iron. When a rode of iron is heated in a furnace, fire pervades the red-hot iron, although the fire and the rod are quite distinct and independent of one another. Similarly God pervades the individual souls and nature, although He is quite distinct from both of them. "They form His body in the sense that, though animated, sustained and controlled by Him for His own ends, their change and imperfections do not in any way affect His own essential nature*". He only appears to be identical; but immanence is not identity.

Apart from the evidence of the Vedas and other scriptures, there is a very useful clue to the doctrine of immanence in the etymology of certain names usually applied to God: Viṣṇu, Śipivīṣṭa, Puruṣa, Nārāyaṇa, and Vāsudeva.

Viṣṇu

The most usual name of God in the devotional philosophy of Rāmānuja is Viṣṇu and this word as well as some of its synonyms suggest God's immanence in man and nature. Viṣṇu is the object of adoration with Rāmānuja as is evident from the invocations with which he begins his writings.²⁴ The word is found even in the *Rg-veda*, the earliest of the scriptures of the Hindus. The word is derived from the root *Viṣl* to pervade. One who pervades all beings, moveable and immovable, the sentient and the non-sentient, is Viṣṇu. The word has several other senses viz, the sun, fire, etc. but in religio-philosophical discourses of the Vedānta, it denotes the

*Hindu Conception of the the Deity by B. Kumarappa, London: 1934, page 327.

Supreme Reality. The Rgveda says that the ancients used to implore Him for His grace ; and the Aitareya mentions that Viṣṇu is the Supreme god.

Śipiviṣṭa

We know from the Nirukta of Yāska that another name of Viṣṇu is Śipiviṣṭa.²⁵ This name is as old as Viṣṇu, and both have the same significance. Invoking God by His thousand names, the devotees daily recite the name of Śipiviṣṭa also.²⁶ But this name seems to have been second to Viṣṇu in the age of the Rgveda. It occurs four times in the 99th and the 100th hymns of book VII of the Rgveda—once in the former and thrice in the latter. Both the hymns are addressed to Viṣṇu. As regards the construction of the word, it seems most probable that the root *pīṣa*²⁷ became *Śipa* by metathesis. Such a metathetical process is quite familiar to the scholars of philology. The Sanskrit word for lion—*Sinha*—is a well-known instance of such a change of letters.²⁸ The root ‘*pīṣa*’ means to be in particles, and ‘*śipi*’ thus stands for a particle, the smallest portion, an atom. One who is pervaded (*viṣṭa*) in Śipi or each and every atom is called Śipiviṣṭa. This meaning of the word seems to have been prevalent among the ancient sages. But as the time went on, the real significance was lost sight of, and the word was interpreted in many fanciful senses. Śāṅkara has offered two alternative interpretations of the word. First, *sipi* is fauna, so that one who rests among animals as sacrifice is Śipiviṣṭa. Secondly, *śipis* are rays, and one who is present there is Śipiviṣṭa. The former interpretation is based on Taittirīya Samhitā according to which sacrifice is Viṣṇu, fauna is *śipi* and it is sacrifice that is among the fauna. The latter interpretation is based on the Mahābhārata according to which Śi is water because it is cold (*Śita*), and because the Lord sleeps thereon (*Śete*) ; and those which protect and drink water are *śipis* i. e. rays. Since the Lord is in the rays, He is called Śipiviṣṭa.²⁹

Puruṣa

The third epithet is *Puruṣa*. The idea of God's immanence as indicated by the derivation, grammatical and philological, of the word Viṣṇu and Śipiviṣṭa is also conveyed by the term ‘*Puruṣa*’ which is used by Rāmānuja in compounds such as *Puruṣa-vara*,³⁰ *Paramapuruṣa*³¹ and *Puruṣottama*³² as synonyms of Viṣṇu. There is a hymn containing sixteen stanzas in the Rgveda, which has recorded the great glory of God under the name of *Puruṣa* (literally man),

hence the hymn is called the 'Hymn of Man'; and Viṣṇu is traditionally worshiped through that hymn. The gist of it is that Puruṣa protecting this universe by His touch and immanence has transcended it,³³ and that it is the Puruṣa from whom came, after the creation of Virāt or Cosmos, the Vedas, Indra, fire, air, ether, sky, sun, moon, earth, various regions, castes, birds and beasts. The same hymn is repeated in the Yajurveda where we find six more verses added to the original sixteen. The last verse contains the names of Śrī and Lakṣmi, which indicates that the Person of the Puruṣa-sūkta is no other than Viṣṇu, for Śrī and Lakṣmi are His consorts. According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, all the worlds are cities as it were: and the one who resides there is Puruṣa.³⁴

Nārāyaṇa

The fourth name is Nārāyaṇa which Rāmānuja applies to the Deity. This is very important, because this name forms a part of the holy formulae of the sacred incantation practised by the followers of Viśiṣṭādvaita, and because the mantras containing this name are held to be as sacred as the final advice contained in stanza (18.66) of the Gītā. The word occurred probably for the first time in the Viṣṇugāyatrī of the Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā where it is mentioned along with 'keśava' and 'Viṣṇu'.³⁵ While commenting on the hymn of Puruṣa, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa characterises Puruṣa as Nārāyaṇa.³⁶ The word again occurs in the Taittirīyāranyaka which contains the Viṣṇugāyatrī in an altered form.³⁷ The Latyāyana Śrauta sūtra also makes a reference to the name.³⁸ According to Manu, nārā is the cosmic (primal) water, the Deity's abode. He is therefore called Nārāyaṇa meaning 'one that resides on water'.³⁹ Whatever is seen or heard in the universe, the Nārāyanopaniṣad says, is pervaded both inwardly and outwardly by Nārāyaṇa.⁴⁰ The word occurs in the Rāmāyaṇa also,⁴¹ and the Mahābhārata has simply repeated the idea of the Manusmṛti.⁴² It has yet another meaning as suggested by grammarians: one whose abode (ayana) is the totality of men (nāra) is Nārāyaṇa.⁴³ The totality of men i.e. humanity seems, however, to be symbolic for the whole creation.

Vāsudeva

The fifth name is Vāsudeva⁴⁴ which also signifies the Deity is all-pervasive. Etymologically, the word is derivable from the root *vas*—to reside. Sages therefore called Him Vāsudeva, the abode of all.⁴⁵ It is also significant that Rāmānuja concluded his Śrī-bhāṣya with the quotation of a line from the Gītā wherein the Deity Him-

self admits that it is difficult to come across a sage who has realised that all is Vāsudeva.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Thus all the five names—Viṣṇu, Śipivisṭa, Puruṣa, Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva—equally point to the philosophic conception that God pervades His creation. They are all equally expressive of God's immanence in man and nature.⁴⁷ According to Rāmānuja, God, the inner controller of man and nature, is real; but no less real are men and nature. On this point Śaṅkara differs fundamentally from Rāmānuja. Śaṅkara admits two different standpoints of viewing Reality. From one, Reality is Higher Brahman (para); whereas from the other, it is Lower Brahman (apara). The former lacks attributes which the latter possesses. It is the Lower, and not the Higher Brahman, which according to Śaṅkara, rules over and guides the animate and the inanimate nature. There is neither subjectivity nor objectivity in the Higher Brahman, but the Lower One has both. There is however no such distinction in the philosophy of Rāmānuja. He believes in one type of Brahman and unlike Śaṅkara, he regards Brahman and Iṣvara as synonymous. The Supreme of Rāmānuja i. e. Brahman or Iṣvara is a person but His personality is not due to any illusion (māya). The doctrine of the immanence of God in man and nature as explained by Rāmānuja has been accepted by other exponents of Vaiṣṇavism. Commenting on the Brahmasūtra 1. 2. 18, Maddhva says that Viṣṇu alone is the indweller.⁴⁸ Nimbarka also agrees by holding that Kṛṣṇa upholds all from within.⁴⁹ According to the Śuddhādvaita School, Kṛṣṇa as indweller (antaryāmin) pervades the world and regulates it.⁵⁰ The Gauḍiya school of Vaiṣṇavism holds that Kṛṣṇa as Paramātman is the immanent regulator and He is called Mahā-Viṣṇu, Garbhoda-Śayī and Kṣiraśayī when viewed respectively from the standpoints of (1) phenomenal totality, (2) totality of individual souls and (3) an individual soul.⁵¹ Thus the apostles of the Vaiṣṇava faith have believed in the Deity's immanence in man and nature. They simply expounded in their own way the doctrine which was set forth in the Pāñcarātra literature according to which one of the five aspects of the Deity is immanence. Anantārya of the Viśiṣṭādvaita school tries to explain immanence as an inexplicable contact of Divinity with man and the world.⁵² Rāmānuja, however, sounds a note of warning. Immanence, he says, should not be confounded with transformation. God's immanence in man and nature, according to him, cannot mean that He is transformed into man and nature.⁵³ What is really meant is that He pervades the creation and the created.

References

1. योनिशब्दशब्दोपादन-वचन इति यथोर्णनाभिः सूजते गृह्णते चेति वाक्यशेषादव-
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चाविकारः । एवमेव जीवप्रकारसंस्थिते परमात्मनि च प्रकारभूत-जीवांशे सर्वे
चापुरुषार्थाः । प्रकार्यंशो नियन्ता निरवदः (वेदार्थं-संग्रहः, पृष्ठम् ११६)

CHAPTER V

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

Brahman simultaneously both Nirguna and Saguṇa—Difference between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja—Patañjali and Rāmānuja—The absolute or fundamental and the relative attributes—Consciousness—Bliss—Truth—Purity—Infinitude—Attributes in relation to the universe—Attributes in relation to the individual souls in general—Attributes in relation to the individual souls in particular—The six attributes stressed in the Purāṇa and the Pāñcarātra.

Absence of Imperfection and Presence of all Blessed Qualities in God.

Although God is immanent in individual souls and unconscious matter, yet His nature is not in the least affected by their imperfections. Commenting on the Brahma-sutra 3.2.11-25 Rāmānuja argues that God has two chief characteristics. First, He is devoid of all imperfections (nirdosa) and secondly, He is the abode of all blessed qualities (kalyāṇagunātmaka)¹. The imperfections which belong to the individual soul in its waking consciousness, dreams, deep sleep, swoon and death do not affect the Diety. Nor does His contact with unconscious matter affect His nature. It is not merely one's residence in a body but one's subjection to the influence of good and evil deeds that causes one pleasure and pain.² Since God is not under the influence of action (karma), His nature is ever free from pollution. The Muṇḍaka Upaṇiṣad says that one of the birds i. e., the jiva eats the sweet fruit while the other i. e., God looks on without eating.³ God, as Rāmānuja argues, is thus free from all imperfections, and at the same time has blessed qualities. The Chāndogya denies imperfections to God by stating that the Supreme Person is free from evil, free from old age, free from death, free from grief, free from hunger and thirst. It then adds that His wishes are realized and His determinations are fulfilled.⁴ 'Śruti' is unequivocally in agreement with Rāmānuja on this point. Its first part denies the imperfections and the second affirms the blessed qualities. The Viṣṇupurāṇa declares the same thing. 'He has all the blessed qualities like energy, strength, might, wisdom and valour; and there are no imperfections—pain and others—in Him.'⁵ Freedom from all blemishes and possession of all blessed qualities are not incompatible in the

nature of God who is simultaneously both Nirguna and Saguṇa—Nirguna in the sense that sattva, rajas and tamas do not exist in His essence (svartupa), and Saguṇa in the sense that all blessed qualities are His essential attributes. The Viṣṇu-purāṇa clearly states that the triad of material attributes is absent in God.⁶ The positive blessed qualities of God are so impressing and attracting that even the emancipated souls, revelling in themselves keep themselves engaged in unselfish devotion to God.⁷ Endless is the number of the blessed qualities that qualify Him.⁸

Śaṅkara denied all attributes to the Higher Brahman and held that it is the Lower Brahman that possesses attributes. In his ṣaṭpadī (a poem consisting of six stanzas), he praised the Deity as an abode of attributes (guna-mandira)⁹ Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja adored Viṣṇu, but they viewed the Deity from different angles. According to the former, Viṣṇu is Brahman as associated with cosmic ignorance, whereas according to the latter, no such thing can be associated with Him. Again, according to Advaita Vedānta, attributes such as omniscience and lordship belong to the Lower Brahman and not to the Absolute, the Higher Brahman. Since the limiting adjunct of Iṣvara has preponderance of pure sattva, He knows, creates and rules over all. But Brahman, the unconditioned, pure consciousness, does not have these attributes. God, according to Śaṅkara, is thus saguṇa (possessor of attributes) and He is so in virtue of His association with ignorance in its cosmic aspect. Although ignorance, as he holds, cannot be described either as being or non-being, yet it is, in his view, made of three positive qualities—sattva, rajas and tamas.¹⁰ It is because of God's possession of these three qualities of which sattva is the most predominant, that He is saguṇa.¹¹ The Absolute on the other hand is nirguna (devoid of attributes), because these qualities do not belong to it. Thus did Śaṅkara admit two aspects of Brahman.¹² But Rāmānuja admitted no distinction between the Higher Brahman and the Lower Brahman. According to him, the Supreme Reality is one; and It is simultaneously nirguna and saguṇa. It is nirguna in the sense that It has no attribute in common with prakṛti. It is again saguṇa, because all the auspicious qualities such as bliss, beauty, compassion, omniscience belong to It. Maddhva,¹³ Nimbarka,¹⁴ Vallabha,¹⁵ and Rupa Goswāmi¹⁶ agree with Rāmānuja in admitting the absence in God of all defects that are natural to the world of matter and individual souls and the presence in Him of all auspicious qualities.

God as conceived by the Yoga system is a puruṣa endowed with pure consciousness. He is predominantly characterised by sattva¹⁷

and so comes to possess the attribute of omniscience. The omniscient aspect of God is, therefore, according to Yoga, not essential but adventitious.¹⁸ Cognition being a function of buddhi, its association gives God a foreign character. Yoga thus differs from Rāmānuja who holds that knowledge is not an accidental feature of God but essential to Him.

All the auspicious attributes constitute the essence of God. Rāmānuja has classified them under two heads which we might respectively call the absolute and the relative. The former are admitted in common by all systems of meditation, but the latter are admitted only by some particular ones.* Rāmānuja holds that the conception of God as endowed with the absolute qualities is essential to all forms of meditation, while they may differ from one another with regard to relative attributes. Truth, consciousness, bliss, purity and infinity are fundamental qualities, while compassion etc., are relative ones.¹⁹ For the sake of convenience the latter may be classified as follows :—

1. Attributes in relation to the universe e.g. creatorship,
2. Attributes in relation to the individual souls in general e.g. dispensation of the fruits of actions, and
3. Attributes in relation to the souls individually and separately e.g. assurance of safety to those who seek protection.

As regards the blessed attributes, Rāmānuja states that He has an infinite number of them. Those among them which he frequently mentions are as follows.

The Fundamental Attributes

Consciousness

Śaṅkara strove his best to establish the unqualified nature of Brahman. He viewed It as devoid of all differences and held that the triad of knower, knowledge and the object known is a product of nescience. As there are no attributes in Brahman, It is unqualified. Even consciousness cannot be called an attribute of Brahman. It is, according to him, the essence of Brahman. But Rāmānuja disagrees and argues that since Brahman is the abode of infinite blessed qualities, It cannot but be qualified. It is attributes such as bliss and consciousness that constitute the essence of God, just as light and heat do in the case of fire. We cannot conceive of fire without light, heat etc.; similarly we cannot conceive of God apart from consciousness, bliss etc. Consciousness being an attribute of Brahman, the latter is a knower. Consciousness is thus the essence as well as the

*The *Upaniṣads* speak of several *Vidyās* such as *Dahara-vidyā* and *Śaṅḍiliya-vidyā* which prescribe different modes of meditation.

attribute of Brahman,²⁰ just as heat is the essence as well as the attribute of fire. Hence Rāmānuja calls these attributes the essential attributes of God. Brahman cannot be regarded as omniscient, if He be held to be mere consciousness. He can be spoken of as omniscient only when knowledge is considered to be one of His attributes. God is all-knowing, because He knows whatever exists. Knowledge presupposes the knower and the known. In the expression 'omniscient' i.e. all-knowing the 'omni' or 'all' refers to the objects and the 'scient' or 'Knower', to the subject of knowledge. Even an individual soul is a knower (of course, in a limited sense) only in so far as he has knowledge as one of his attributes. If it were not so, he would not have had the experience : 'I am conscious', instead of 'I am consciousness'. Rāmānuja did not believe, like Śaṅkara, in pure, unqualified, transcendental consciousness, but held that consciousness and knowledge are synonymous. However, just as smell is different from earth, so is the attribute of knowledge different from its substratum, the ātman.²¹ Hence Viśiṣṭādvaita lays stress on the difference between a substance and an attribute.²² It agrees with the Naiyāyikas on this point. Keśava Miśra says that the relation between two inseparable entities is the relation of samavāya which subsists between (a) the whole and its part, and (b) substance and its attribute etc.²³ The relation of samavāya or necessary inherence between substance and attribute of the Nyāya system is, in fact, the same as the relation of aprthak-siddhi of Viśiṣṭādvaita.

The ātman's subjecthood is no defect in it. To be knower is to be the substratum of the attribute of knowledge which is the essential nature of the ātman.²⁴ Rāmānuja does not, however, favour the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view that knowledge is an adventitious attribute of the self. On the contrary, he takes knowledge to be essentially related to the self. He does not, likewise, approve of the Śaṅkhya view that knowledge is, at the kevala stage, devoid of the difference between the knower and the known. For Rāmānuja, mere consciousness is not the self. The characteristic of the self is egoity,²⁵ and on this point the ācārya agrees with Prabhākara school of Mimāṃsā. The view that abhāṅkāra is itself the knower, Rāmānuja argues, is wrong, because abhāṅkāra is unconscious and so can never be the knower.²⁶ According to Śaṅkara, the self and consciousness are one whereas the self and egoity are different ; but according to Rāmānuja and Prabhākara, the self and egoity are one while the self and knowledge are different.

An individual soul depends for its knowledge on the sense-organs ; hence its knowledge is dependent, voluntary and partial.

But God's knowledge is of a different nature, being independent, spontaneous and complete. If knowledge is eternal, how is it, one might urge, that we have it in the waking state but lose it in deep sleep? The reply is that an embodied soul does not actually apprehend external objects in deep sleep because of the prevalence, during that state, of *tamas*, just as fire does not burn fuel when it is obstructed by a special stone, although its burning capacity is there all the time.

The followers of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* school hold that substance and attribute are different. An attribute cannot be a substance. But in the philosophy of Rāmānuja consciousness is both a substance and an attribute inasmuch as it inheres in its substratum and also transcends it just as light inheres in the sun and also goes beyond it.²⁷ *Viśiṣṭādvaita* thus classifies attributes under two heads viz. (a) pure attributes and (b) attributes cum substance; and places consciousness under the latter. The Vedic conception that the mind of a waking person goes away far and that of a sleeping one returns,²⁸ might have suggested to *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy the idea that an individual soul resides in the heart,²⁹ whereas its attribute, consciousness, reaches not only all parts of the body but also goes beyond to external objects through the sense-organs.³⁰ In corroboration of this view Rāmānuja put forward instances of a gem, the sun and so on, which themselves remain at one place but emit their rays far and wide.³¹

God is omniscient. He knows all things perfectly and eternally. His knowledge is immediate inasmuch as it does not depend upon the function of the sense-organs as does knowledge in the case of individual souls. Omnipotence does not, however, embrace what is self-contradictory. God cannot, for instance, be supposed to know the cessation of His own eternal being. And it would be futile to assign ignorance to God as does the author of the *Nāsadiya-sukta* in the *Rgveda*, doubting if even the Lord Himself knows or knows not whence this creation came.³² Such a doubt may imply poetic beauty and suggest the unimaginable vastness and mysteriousness of the world, but philosophically speaking, creation is not due to any thing but God. It is where it has been all the time. One's ignorance of what does not exist presupposes one's true knowledge.³³

Bliss

Consciousness is not the only attribute of God; He has other attributes also. Lustre is not the only attribute of a piece of a diamond, it has a shape and possesses weight. A substance may thus have many attributes, but it is only natural that we should make men-

tion only of those attributes which are most prominent. We speak of lustre in a gem, sweet taste in sugar, heat in fire, light in the sun, fragrance in the flower and so on. But this does not mean that these objects do not possess other attributes. As a matter of fact, they do possess other attributes. A gem, for instance, has weight; sugar has whiteness; fire has glow; the sun has heat; and a flower has colour too. Similarly God possesses many qualities in addition to omniscience, and bliss is one of them.³⁴

Bliss has its grades, and the Taittiriya Upaniṣad has enumerated them starting from the human and ending in the Divine.³⁵ It shows that God's bliss is the highest. Bliss is an attribute of God, but sometimes the term is used as a synonym of God.³⁶ Since ānanda (bliss) inheres in God, He is characterised as ānandamaya (blissful). The suffix 'maya', indicates profuseness or abundance and not transformation, says Rāmānuja.³⁷ One might urge that the presence of abundance of bliss in God implies the presence of some measure of pain in Him. To this Rāmānuja replies that the scriptures speak of the absence of all pain in Him.³⁸ 'Rasa' is another name for ānanda; hence God is called 'Rasa' too.³⁹

It is necessary to note in this connection that bliss as an attribute of God is not the same thing as the ānanda which Sāṅkhyā conceives as the object of an organ of action.⁴⁰ In the case of an embodied soul the mediacy of an organ may be necessary for the enjoyment of bliss, but God's bliss is, like His knowledge, independent, spontaneous and complete.

Truth

God's existence yields to no transformation and so is absolute or supreme. The changing universe rests in God who is changeless. He is therefore called Sat. There is also no contraction in Divine consciousness as there may be in the consciousness of individual souls in association with action (karma). God is therefore the 'real of the reals' or the 'truth of the truths'.⁴¹

Infinity

God transcends both time and space i.e. He is not limited by them. The Upaniṣad says that Brahman is ananta.⁴² The Bhāgavata says, 'Salutation to Him whose end is not known even to gods and demons alike'.⁴³

Purity

God is free from all imperfections of the empirical world e.g. pleasure and pain, hunger and thirst, old age and death. The above-

mentioned attributes viz. truth, consciousness, bliss and infinity are specifically characteristics of God inasmuch as they are fundamentally opposed to the evils of mundane life.⁴⁴

Attributes in Relation to the Universe.

God is both the efficient and the material cause of the universe. Again, the whole creation rests in Him. He supports the entire universe and He is the abode of heaven and earth and so on.⁴⁵ Furthermore, God holds back all creation in Him, at the time of dissolution. He consumes all whether moving or stationary.⁴⁶

Power (bala)

The quality with which God supports the universe is called *bala*. The *Upaniṣad* says that the sun and the moon, the sky and the earth keep firm in their places under Divine order.⁴⁷ God upholds all lest they should fall asunder.

Prowess (virya)

Freedom from transmutation is *virya*.⁴⁸ Milk is changed into curd, and such transformation is observed everywhere in the domain of nature. But God is above such change; hence He is called *nir-vikāra*.

Energy (Śakti)

It is the attribute in virtue of which God makes possible what seems impossible. He can turn a mote into a mountain and vice versa, by means of His energy which is indeed incomprehensible to the human mind. The *Upaniṣad* says that the Supreme energy of God is multifarious.⁴⁹

Overlordship (aiśvarya)⁵⁰

God keeps all things under His control.⁵¹ He rules over all the sentient and the insentient beings. The *antaryāmi-brāhmaṇa* of the *Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* mentions objects such as the earth, the individual soul and so on which are controlled by God. The *Māndūkya* says that God is the Lord of all,⁵² and *Brhadāraṇyaka* also avers that He is Master of all beings.⁵³

True Desire and Infallible Resolve

God's will is never hampered, and nothing can impede His desires. Countless things are accomplished by His resolve.

Attributes in Relation to the Individual Souls in General

Source of their activity

The individual souls are inspired in their activities by the Lord.⁵⁴ Every action depends, according to Rāmānuja, upon volitional effort and he points out that the injunctions and the prohibitions laid down in the scriptures are not meaningless. God aids the effort of the individual souls by granting them His permission.⁵⁵ He is, however, not to be blamed as partial and cruel. Diversity of pleasure and pain generally takes place in accordance with the past actions of the individual souls.⁵⁶ But, holds Rāmānuja, in exceptional cases, particularly in the case of extremely devoted persons, the primary effort is actuated by God.

Dispensation of the fruits of Action

Action is non-intelligent; hence it is incapable of bringing about good or bad result in future. According to Rāmānuja, it is omniscient and omnipotent God who gives us various forms of enjoyment here or hereafter as well as release from temporal life.⁵⁷

Sweetness (mādhurya)

The sages who realized God found Him to be most pleasant and agreeable, and they have told about His sweetness to others.⁵⁸ Ultimate Reality is indeed supernatural, but the sages employed certain words of everyday use to express its nature. They could not find in the vocabulary of common use better words than 'Life', 'Light' and so on; and they had to rest content with the use of such words for the purpose. They loved the Real and were happy to call it by the best names available. Bādarāyaṇa warned the readers of the Upaniṣads against the folly confounding such epithets of God as Life and Light with material life and light, and Rāmānuja, while commenting on the Brahmasutra 1.1.28, has clearly brought out this point.⁵⁹

Compassion (karuṇā)

Compassion prompts God to do good to the individual souls and to grant them salvation. This attribute has been conceived by Vadgalais as the desire to remove the pain of the afflicted devotee; and by the Tengalais, as the experience of the pain of the afflicted. Hence a point of dispute between the two sects.

Mildness of Disposition (Mardava)

Śrinivāsādāsa has conceived this attribute as God's inability to bear separation from His devotees.⁶⁰ Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said, 'I would not be

able to bear separation of my lovers from me' (Rāmānuja on Gītā 8. 14).⁶¹

Sincerity (ārjava)

It has been understood as uniformity of thought, speech and action.⁶²

Dexterity (cāturya)

It is the skill of concealing the shortcomings of devotees, according to Śrinivāsādāsa⁶³

Equality (sāmya)

It is the attribute of being adorable by all irrespective of differences of caste and creed.⁶⁴

Affection (vātsalya)

According to Śrinivāsādāsa, this attribute consists in either not taking into consideration the devotees' imperfections, or in regarding their demerits as merits⁶⁵.

Friendliness (sauhārda)

God is the eternal friend of individual souls. The conception of God's friendliness is as old as the Rgveda (1.164.20).⁶⁶ The Śvetāśvatara reiterates the same (4.6).⁶⁷ The Gītā also reveals that God is friend of all beings (5.29).⁶⁸ Rāmānuja adds that all people move forward to adore friends.⁶⁹ Śrinivāsādāsa has, however, interpreted 'sauhārda' as the quality of being engrossed in the protection of the other.⁷⁰

Attributes in Relation to the Individual Souls in Particular.

Excellence of Disposition (sausīlīya)

God is affable to inferiors. He comes down to live even amongst persons of low status such as cowherds with whom He sports without the least reserve.

Generosity (audārya)

As an illustration of this attribute, Kureśa has referred, in his Octave on Nārāyaṇa or (Nārāyaṇaṣṭaka), to Śri Kṛṣṇa's attitude towards Draupadi in supplying her with immense raiments.⁷¹

Firmness (sthairya)

As an instance of this attribute one might quote, from the Rāmāyaṇa, the incident where Rāma, finding Lakṣmaṇa wounded on the battlefield, did not care in the least for the shower of arrows

darted upon him by the enemy, but went on taking out the missile from the brother's wound.⁷²

Valour (Śaurya)

According to Śrinivāsadāsa, valour is the capacity for entering into hostile forces. Rāma, for instance, chivalrously desired to face the forces led by Khara, despite his knowledge that even Lakṣmaṇa could overcome them.⁷³

Heroism (parākrama)

It has been interpreted as subjugation of the hostile party. Rāma's victory over Rāvaṇa may be quoted as an instance.⁷⁴

Gratitude (kṛtajñatā)

Rāma's attitude towards Hanumān when the latter had brought the news of Śītā's safety and whereabouts, may be mentioned as an instance of gratitude.⁷⁵

Assurance of Safety to Those Seeking Protection

(Śaranyatā)

While extending His assurance of safety to Vibhiṣaṇa, Rāma said, "I vouchsafe fearlessness from all beings to one who even once surrenders to Me and says 'I am thine, O Lord.' "⁷⁶

Fortitude (dhairyā)

It is the mental power in meeting dangers, but Śrinivāsadāsa has interpreted it as the keeping of promises.⁷⁷

Removal of Affliction (ārtiharata)

For example, the Lord at once came to help Gajendra when the latter was attacked by an alligator. The story is well known, and is narrated at length in the Bhāgavata (Canto VIII, Chapters 2 to 4).⁷⁸

Vigour (tejas).

It is the attribute in virtue of which one dominates over others.⁷⁹

Attainability with Ease (saulabhyā)

God is easy to attain for one who yearns for eternal union with Him, says Rāmānuja.⁸⁰

Of the many attributes of God, the Viṣṇu-purāṇa lays stress on six viz consciousness, power, prowess, energy, vigour and overlordship,⁸¹ and alternatively refers to overlordship, consciousness, renown; lustre, righteousness and renunciation.⁸² The Purāṇa tells

us that a collective group of these six qualities is called 'bhaga', and that he who possess all of them in entirety or fulness is called Bhagavān. This word is primarily used for God, but only secondarily for gods, sages and the like.⁸³ The pāñcarātra view on the attributes of God tallies with that of the Viṣṇu-purāṇa.⁸⁴ Kureśa has made a mention, in his octave ode to Nārāyaṇa, of another group of six attributes which appealed perhaps most to him. They are : affection, protection, removal of affliction, generosity, removal of sins and bestowal of high status.⁸⁵

Rupa Gosvāmī of the Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava School has enumerated sixtyfour attributes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The sweet sports, circle of the affectionate, playing on the flute and excellent beauty are regarded by him as Śrī Kṛṣṇa's exclusive attributes.⁸⁶ The remaining sixty are said to exist in Nārāyaṇa also.⁸⁷ Siva, Brahmā, etc., have fifty-five,⁸⁸ whereas others are conceived as possessing fifty only, but of course on a small scale.⁸⁹

The view held by Rāmānuja that God's attributes are innumerable is in accord with the teachings of the scriptural texts. Eulogizing Śrī Lakṣmi, Indra says in the Viṣṇu-purāṇa : "Even Brahmā cannot exhaustively describe thy attributes, O mother !"⁹⁰ Rightly do the gods say in Kālidāsa's Raghuvamśa (10.32) : 'That we refrain from praising thy greatness, O Lord, is due to our fatigue and incapability and not to any limitations to Thy attributes.'⁹¹

References

1. यतः सर्वं श्रुतिः-स्मृतिः परं ब्रह्मोभयिलिगमुभयलक्षणमभिधीयते निरस्त निखिलदोषत्व-कल्याणागणगणाकरत्व-लक्षणोपेतमित्यर्थः ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् ३. २. ११.)
2. न हि शरीरान्तर्वत्तित्वमेव सुखदुःखोपभोगे हेतुरपि तु पुण्यपापरूप-कर्मपरवश-त्वमेव ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. २. ८.)
3. अपि चेके शाखिन एकस्मिन्नेव देह-संयोगे जीवस्यापुरुषार्थं परस्य तु तदभावम्*** अधीयते ।
(श्री भाष्यम् ३. २. १३.)
4. अपहृतपापमा विजरो विमुत्युविशोकोऽविजिवत्सोऽपिपासः सत्यकामः सत्यसंकल्पः ।
(द्वान्दोग्योपनिषद् ७. १. ५.)
5. तेजोवलैश्वर्य-महावबोध-सुवीर्यंशकृत्यादि गुरुण्कराशिः ।
परः पराणां सकला न यत्र क्लेशादयः सन्ति परावरेषो ॥
(विष्णु पुराणम् ६. ५. ८५.)

6. सत्त्वादयो न सन्तीशे यत्र च प्राकृता गुणाः ।
स शुद्धः सर्वशुद्धे भ्यः पुमानादः प्रसीदतु ॥ (श्री विष्णु पुराणम्)

7. आत्मारामाश्च मुनयो निर्गन्ध्या अप्युरुक्मे ।
कुर्वन्त्यहैतुकीं भक्तिमित्यंभूत गुणो हरिः । (भागवतम्)

8. ब्रह्मणोनन्तेन कल्याणगुणगणेन विशिष्टत्वं सिद्धम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. २. २५.)

9. दामोदर गुण-मन्दिर सुन्दरवदनारविन्द गोविन्द ।
भव-जलधिमयन-मन्दिर परमं दरमपनय त्वं मे ॥ (शंकराचार्यकृता पट्टपटी)

10. अज्ञानं तु सदसदभ्यामनिवंचनीयं त्रिगुणात्मकं ज्ञानविरोधि भावरूपं यत् किंचिदिति वदन्ति । (वेदान्तसारः ३४)

11. (अ) इयं समप्रिष्ठकृष्टोपाधितया विशुद्ध-सत्त्व-प्रधाना । (वेदान्तसारः ३७)
(ब) एतदुपहितं चैतन्यं सर्वज्ञत्व-सर्वेश्वरत्व-सर्वनियमतृत्वादिगुणकमध्यक्षं मन्तर्यामी जगत्कारणमीश्वर इति च व्यपदिष्यते । (वेदान्तसारः ३८)

12. किं द्वे ब्रह्माणी परमपरं चेति ? वाहं द्वे, एतद्वे सत्यकाम परं चापरं च ब्रह्म यदोंकार इत्यादि दर्शनात् । (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकर भाष्यम् ४. २. १४.)

13. नारायणं गुणः सर्वहेतुं दोषवर्जितम् । (ब्रह्मसूत्रोपरि मध्यभाष्ये मंगलाचरणम्)

14. स्वभावतोऽपास्त-समस्तदोषमवेषकल्याण-गुणकरायिषम् । (दशश्लोकी)

15. निषेधकश्रुतीनां प्रातीतिक-प्राकृतधर्मविद्यत्वं धर्म-विधायकोपनिषदां त्वप्राकृत-निष्ठश्रुतधर्मविषयत्वं । (प्रमेय रत्नाणं वे शुद्धाद्वैत-मतम्)

16. (अ) प्रकटित-प्राकृतातीत-स्वाभाविका-नन्तगुणस्य तवास्तां तावद् गणनवार्ता ।
(दुर्गम संगमनी)
(ब) समस्त-विविधाश्चर्यं-कल्याण-गुणवारिष्येः ।
गुणानामिह कृष्णस्य दिङ्-मात्रमुपदर्शितम् ॥ (भक्ति रसामृत सिन्धुः २. १. ७४.)

17. प्रकृष्ट सत्त्वोपादानादीश्वरस्य शाश्वतिक उत्कर्षः ।
(योगसूत्रे व्यासभाष्यम् १. २४.)

18. जन्मनुद्दरिष्यामि ज्ञानघर्मोपदेशोन् इत्यालोच्य सत्त्वप्रकर्षमुपादत्ते भगवान् तदिदमाहायंमस्य रूपं न तास्त्रिकम् ।
(योगसूत्रोपरि व्यास भाष्ये वाचस्पतिमिथ टीका १. २४.)

19. (अ) ये त्वर्यसमाना अर्थनिष्ठगुणधर्मत्वेनायंप्रतीत्यनुबन्धनस्तेऽर्थस्वरूपवत् सर्वंत्रानुवर्तन्ते ते च गुणाः सत्यज्ञानानन्दामलत्वानन्तत्वानि । ये तु निष्ठपितस्वरूपस्य ब्रह्मणः कारणादयो गुणाः प्रतिपन्नास्तेषां गुण्यपृथक्स्तित्यत्वेषि प्रतीत्यनुबन्धत्वाभावाद्ये यत्र श्रुतास्ते तत्रेषोपसंहार्या इति निरवचम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. ३. १३.)
(ब) येन गुणजातेन विना ब्रह्मस्वरूपस्येतर-व्यावृतस्य अनुसंधानं न सम्भवति तदेव सर्वंत्रानुवर्तनीयम् तच्चेयदेवेत्यर्थः । इतरे सर्वकर्मत्वादयः प्रधानानुबन्धिनोपि चिन्तनीयत्वेन प्रतिविधं व्यवस्थिताः । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. ३. ३४.)

20. (अ) एवमात्मा चिदरूप एव चैतन्यगुणकः । (श्रीभाष्यम्)
(ब) अस्य ज्ञानस्वरूपस्यैव ज्ञानश्रयत्वमविरुद्धम् । (श्रीभाष्यम्)
साक्षाद्वृष्टि संज्ञायामिति साक्षाज् ज्ञातयेव साक्षिशब्दः । (श्रीभाष्यम्)

21. सत्यं ज्ञान मननं ब्रह्मेति विपश्चितः प्राज्ञस्य ज्ञानशब्देन व्यपदेशः ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् २. ३. २६.)

(अ) यथा पृथिव्या गन्धस्य गुणत्वेनोपलभ्यमानस्य ततो व्यतिरेकस्तथा जानामीति ज्ञातुगुणात्वेन प्रतीयमानस्यात्मनो व्यतिरेकः सिद्धः । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ३. २७.)

(ब) विज्ञानगुणासारत्वादात्मनो विज्ञानमिति व्यपदेशः । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ३. २६.)

22 गुणगुणिनोभेदः किल नित्यदिवचिद्विद्वय-परभेदः सत्यः तदद्वयदेहो हरिरिति तत्त्वं पश्य विशिष्टाद्वैतं तत्त्वम् । (यतिराज स्तोत्रम् १८)

23. तत्रायुत-सिद्धयोः सम्बन्धः समवायः । यदोमेष्ये एकमविनश्यत् अपराश्रितमेवाव-तिष्ठते तावयुत-सिद्धो यथा अवयवावयविनो गुणगुणिनो क्रियाक्रियावन्तो जातिव्यक्ती विशेष-नित्य-द्रव्यं चेति । (तकंभाषा पृष्ठम् २६)

24. न च ज्ञातुत्वं विक्रियात्मकम् । ज्ञातुत्वं हि ज्ञानगुणाश्रयत्वम् । ज्ञानं चास्य नित्यस्य स्वाभाविकधर्मत्वेन नित्यम् । (श्रीभाष्यम्)

25. अहमर्थं एव प्रत्यगात्मा न ज्ञानिमात्रम् । (श्रीभाष्यम्)

26. न ज्ञातुत्वमहंकारस्य, न कदाचिदपि जडस्याहंकारस्य ज्ञातुत्वं-सम्भवः । (श्रीभाष्यम्)

27. आश्रयादन्यतो वृत्ते राश्रयेण समन्वयात्, द्रव्यत्वं च गुणत्वं च ज्ञानस्य प्रतिपद्यते । (यामुनाचार्यः)

— एवं च केचिद् द्रव्यात्मकगुणाः केचित्केवल-गुणाः इति द्विविधा गुणाः । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिकायां प्रकाश टीका)

28. यज्ञायतो दूरमुदैति दैवं तदु सुप्तस्य तर्यैवेति, दूरंगमं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिरेकं तन्मे मनः शिव-संकल्पमस्तु । (यजुर्वेदः)

29. हृदयदेशे ह्यात्मनः स्थितिः शूयते । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ३. २५.)

30. (अ) आत्मा स्वगुणेन ज्ञानेन सकलदेहं व्याप्यावस्थितः । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ३. २६)

(ब) हृतेः पादाश्रयोदकं धारति तथा ज्ञानमपीन्द्रयद्वारा निस्सूत्यावैन सन्निकृत्यते । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७)

31. यथा मणि-द्युमणिप्रभूतीनामेक-देशवर्त्तिनामालोको नैकदेशव्यापी हृदयते । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ३. २६.)

32. यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन् सो ग्रंग वेद यदि वा न वेद । (ऋग्वेद १०. १२६. ७.)

33. यज्ञास्त्वेव तदज्ञातामनुगुणां सर्वज्ञताया विदुः, व्योमाभ्योजमिदन्तया खलु विदन्तु भ्रान्तोयमित्युच्यते । (श्री श्रीस्तवः)

34. आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् । (तैत्तरीय २. ४.)

विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म । (ब्रह्मदारण्यक ३. ६. ३४.)

35. संपानन्दस्य भीमांसा भवति ॥ स एको मानुष आनन्दः ॥ ते ये शर्तं प्रजापतेरानन्दाः स एको ब्रह्मण आनन्दः । (तैत्तरीयोपनिषद् २०८)

36. (अ) आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । (तैत्तरीय ३. ६.)

(ब) प्राज्ञस्यानन्दः सारभूतो गुण इति प्राज्ञ आनन्द-शब्देन व्यपदिश्यते । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ३. २६.)

(स) स्वरूप-निरूपणघर्मशब्दा हि घर्ममुखेन घर्मिस्वरूपमपि प्रतिपादयन्ति । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. १.)

(द) आनन्दः स्वाश्रयमावेदयति । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. १३.)

37. वैद्युतिं विकारासम्भवात् प्राचुर्येषि मयद्विधि-सद्ग्रावाच्चानन्दमयः परं ब्रह्म ।

38. यदुक्तम् आनन्द-प्राचुर्यमल्पदुःखसद्ग्रावमवगमयतीति तदसत् प्रमाणान्तरेण तदभावोवगम्यः । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. १४.)

39. (अ) रसशब्दाभिधेयानन्दमयलाभात् । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. २०.)
(ब) रसो वै सः । (तेत्रीयोपनिषद् २. ७.)

40. वचनादान-विहरणोत्सर्गनन्दाश्च पंचानाम् । (सांख्यकारिका)

41. तस्य च ब्रह्मणः सत्यस्य सत्यमिति नामधेयम् ॥
जीवानां कर्मनुगम्येन ज्ञानसंकोचविकासौ विद्येते, परमपुरुषस्य त्वपहृतपाप्मनस्तो न विद्येते अतस्तेभ्योप्येष सत्यम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. २. २१.)

42. सत्यं ज्ञान मनस्तं ब्रह्म । (तेत्रीयोपनिषद् २. १. १.)

43. यस्यान्तं न विदुः सुरासुरगणा देवाय तस्मै नमः । (भागवतम् १२. १३. ३.)

44. हेयप्रत्यनीको ह्यानन्दादिद्रिंह्याणोसाधारणं रूपम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३. ३. ३३.)

45. द्युपूर्विध्यादीनामायतनं परं ब्रह्म । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. ३. १.)

46. चराचरस्य कृत्स्नस्यात्तृत्वं हि तस्यैव सम्भवति । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. २. ६.)

47. एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गी सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ विष्वृतौ तिष्ठतः ।
(ब्रह्मदारण्यक ३. ८. ६.)

48. वीर्यमविकारित्वम् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७.)

49. परास्य शक्तिविविधैव श्रूयते स्वाभाविकी ज्ञानबलक्रिया च । (श्वेताश्वतर ६. ८.)

50. (अ) ऐश्वर्यं नियमन-सामर्थ्यम् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७.)
(ब) पत्यादिशब्देभ्यः । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् १. ३. ४४.)

51. तच्छ्रासनातिनिवृत्ती कि भविष्यतीति कृत्स्नं जगत्कम्पते । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. ३. ४१.)

52. एष सर्वेश्वरः । (माण्डूक्योपनिषद् ६.)

53. सर्वस्य वशी सर्वस्येशानः । (ब्रह्मदारण्यक ४. ४. २२.)

54. तद् कर्तुं त्वमस्य परात्परमात्मन एव हेतोभवति । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ३. ४०.)

55. पुरुषेण कृतं प्रयत्नमुद्योगमपेक्ष्यान्तर्यामी परमात्मा तदनुमतिदानेन प्रवर्तयति ।
परमात्मानुमतिमन्तरेणास्य प्रवृत्तिर्नोपपद्यते । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. ३. ४१.)

56. (अ) सूज्यमान-देवादि-क्षेत्रज्ञकर्मसापेक्षत्वाद्विषम-सूच्टेः । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. १. ३४.)
(ब) क्षेत्रज्ञ-कर्मनुगम्येन विचित्रसृष्टि-योगात् । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. १. ३५.)

57. स एव हि सर्वेज्ञः सर्वशक्तिर्होदारो यागदानहोमादिभिरुपासनेन चाराधित
ऐहिकामुद्धिक-भोगजातं स्वस्वरूपप्राप्तिरूपमपवर्गं च दातुमीष्टे ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् ३. २. ३७.)

58. (अ) माधुर्याद्यसंख्येय कल्याणगुणगणौषध-महारांगवम् । (श्रीरंगगद्यम्)
(ब) परिपूर्णानिवरत-नित्यविशदतमानन्य-प्रयोजनानवधिकातिशयातिप्रिय - भग-
वदनुभवः । (शरणागतिगद्यम्)

59. (अ) परं ब्रह्मवाकाश प्राणादि शब्दाभिधेयमिति सिद्धम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. २४.)
(ब) स एव ज्योतिशशब्दाभिधेय इति निरवशम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. २८.)

60. आश्रित-विरहासहृत्वं मार्दवम् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७.)

61. तद्वियोगमसहमानोहम् । (गीतायां रामा० ८. १४.)

62. मनोवाक्षायैकरूपमाजंवम् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७.)

63. आश्रितदोष-नोपनं चातुर्यं॒म् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७.)

64. अत्यन्तोत्कृष्टापकृष्टृपेण वर्त्तमानेषु सर्वेषु भूतेषु समाश्रयणीयत्वेन समोहम् । (गीतायां रामानुज-भाष्यम् ६. २६.)

65. वारसत्यं दोषेषि गुणत्वबुद्धिदोषाऽदशित्वं वा । (यतीन्द्र ० ७.)

66. द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया । (ऋबेद १. १६४. २०.)

67. द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया । (श्वेताश्वतर ४. ६.)

68. सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति । (गीतायां रामानुज भाष्यम् ५. २६.)

69. सुहृदामाराधनाय सर्वे प्रवर्त्तते । (गीतायां रामानुज भाष्यम् ५. २६.)

70. स्वसत्तानपेक्ष-तद्रक्षापरत्वं सौहृदं॒म् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७.)

71. भो कृष्णाच्युतं भो कृष्णलयं हरे भो पांडवानां सखे । कासि कसि सुयोधनाच्यपहृतां भो रक्ष मामातुराम् । इत्युक्तोक्षय-वस्त्र-सम्भृततनुयोपालयद् द्रीपदीम् । आत्म त्राणपरायणः स भगवान् नारायणो मे गतिः ॥ (नारायणाष्टकम् ५.)

72. तां कराम्यां परामूद्य रामः शक्तिं भयावहाम् ।
बभंज समरे कुद्धो बलवान् विचक्षयं च ।
तस्य निष्कर्षतः शक्तिं रावणेन बलीयसा ।
शराः सर्वेषु गतेषु पातिता मरम्भेदिनः ॥
अचिन्तयित्वा तान् वारणान् समादिलिघ्य च लक्षणम् ।
अब्रवीच्च हनुमन्तं सुग्रीवं चैव राघवः ।
लक्षणं परिवार्यं तिष्ठत्वं वासरोत्तमाः ।
पराक्रमस्य कालोर्यं सम्प्राप्तो मे चिरेप्सितः ॥ (रामायणम् ६. १००. ४३, ४६.)

73. त्वं हि शूरश्च बलवान् हन्या एतान्म संशयः
स्वयं निहन्तुमिच्छामि सर्वनेव निशाचरान् ॥ (रामायणम् ३. २४. १४)

74. (अ) अव पश्यन्तु रामस्य रामत्वं मम संयुगे ।
त्रयो लोकाः सगन्धवीर्याः सिद्ध-गन्धवं-चारणाः ॥ (रामायणम् ६. १००. ५५)
(ब) न ते मोघाः पराक्रमाः । (रामायणम् ६. ११७. ३१)

75. इत्युक्त्वा प्रीति-हृष्टांगो रामस्तं परिष्वजे ।
हनुमन्तं कृतात्मानं कृतकार्यमुपागतम् ॥ (रामायणम् ६. १. १४)

76. सकृदेव प्रपन्नाय तवास्मीति च याचते ।
अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्येतद् व्रतं मम ॥ (रामायणम्)

77. द्विः शरं नाभिसन्धत्ते द्विस्तापयति नाश्रितान् ।
द्विदंदाति न चाधिभ्यो रामो द्विर्नाभिभासते ॥ (शरणागतिगद्योक्तम्)

78. द्वन्दोमयेन गरुडेन समृद्धामानः, चक्रायुधोभ्यगमदाशु यतो गजेन्द्रः । (भागवतम् ८. ३. ३१)

79. तेजः पराभिभव-सामर्थ्यं॒म् । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७.)

80. तस्य नित्ययुक्तस्य नित्ययोगं कांक्षमाणस्य योगिनोहं सुलभः
(गीतायां रामा० भा० ८. १४)

81. ज्ञानशक्तिं बलैश्वर्यं वीर्यं तेजांस्त्येषतः ।
भगवच्छ्रद्ध वाच्यानि विना हेयैर्गुणादिभिः ॥ (विष्णुपुराणम् ६. ५. ७६)

82. ऐश्वर्यस्य समग्रस्य धर्मस्य यशसः श्रियः ।

ज्ञान वैराग्ययोक्त्वैव पण्णां भग इतींगना ॥ (विष्णुपुराणम् ६.५.७४)

83. तत्र पूज्य-पदः योक्ति-परिभाषा-समन्वितः ।
शब्दोयं नोपचारेण त्वन्यत्र ह्युपचारतः ॥ (विष्णुपुराणम् ६.५.७७)

84. (प्र) चिभिज्जन वलैश्वर्यं वीर्यंशक्त्योजसां युगेः (ब्रह्मतन्त्रान्तर्गतं जितन्ते स्तोत्रम्)
(व) स्वाभाविक-निरतिशयज्ञानवलैश्वर्यं-वीर्यक्तितेजः - प्रभृत्यपरिमितोदारगुण-
सागरः पुरुषोत्तमः (श्रीभाष्यम् १.३.२०)

85. वात्सल्यादभय-प्रदान-समयादात्तिति-निर्वापणात् ।
श्रीदार्या दधशोषणादगणित-श्रेयः पदप्रापणात् ॥ (नारायणाष्टकम्)

86. सर्वाद्भूत चमत्कार लीला कल्लोल वारिधिः ।
अतुल्य मधुर प्रेम मणित प्रिय मण्डलः ॥
त्रिजगन्मानसाकर्षी मुरलीकल कूजितैः ।
असमापित रूप श्री विस्मापित-चराचरः ॥
लीला-प्रेमणा प्रियाधिक्यं माधुर्यं वेगुरूपयोः ।
इत्यसाधारणं प्रोक्तं गोविन्दस्य चतुष्पृष्ठम् ॥ (भक्ति रसामृतसिन्धु २.१.३३५)

87. श्रयोचन्ते गुणाः पंच ये लक्ष्मीशादिषु वर्तिनः ।
(भक्ति रसामृतसिन्धु २.१.२६)

88. श्रव पंच गुणा ये स्यु रंधेन गिरिशादिषु । (भक्ति रसामृतसिन्धु २.१.२६)

89. जीवेष्वेते वसन्तोपि विन्दुविन्दुतया चवचित् । (भक्ति रसामृत० २.१.२६)

90. न ते वर्णयितुं शक्ता गुणान् जिह्वापि वेषसः (विष्णुपुराणम् १.६.१३३)

91. महिमानं यदुत्कीर्त्य तव संहित्यते वचः ।
श्रमेण तदशक्त्या वा न गुणानामियतया ॥ (रघुवंशम् १०.३२)

CHAPTER VI

THE DIVINE FORM.

God's form is His 'svarūpabhūta'—Composed of six attributes—God does not require senseorgans for perceiving objects—Śuddha-sattva, visuddha-sattva prakṛita-sattva or śuddha-tattva—Views of Śaṅkara and Nimbārka—Difference of opinion between Lokācārya and Veṅkaṭanātha—M.N. Sircar, Roma Bose & Gopinātha Kavirāja on śuddha-sattva—Views of the Bengal Vaiṣṇavism—Rahasyāmnāya view—Superb beauty—Blue colour—Ever budding youth—The presence of Śri on the Divine Person.

Just as there are certain scriptural texts¹ to show that God has attributes,² ³ so there are others to tell us that He has a form too. The Iśa Upaniṣad, for instance, tells us that He has a most beneficial form.⁴ The Muṇḍaka informs that the colour of the Deity is like that of gold,⁵ and adds that He discloses His form to him whom he chooses.⁶ The Brhadāraṇyaka also says the same thing,⁷ and the Chāndogya has compared His eyes with lotuses.⁸

In the Vedārtha-saṅgraha, Rāmānuja bases himself on scriptural authority in his view that Brahman has really a form just as he holds, on the basis of the same authority, that He has attributes.⁹ By the word 'form', he means the Deity's most beautiful man-like shape comprising eyes and ears, lips and chin, hands and feet. Commenting on the Brahma-sutra 1. 1. 21 in the Śri-bhāṣya, the acārya says that the scriptures deny to the Supreme Brahman only those attributes and bodies which are the products of prakṛti, but that they proclaim that He has supernatural (aprakṛta) attributes and form.¹⁰ He further points out that Brahman individualises the form that is natural to Him into that of man, god etc. simply for the satisfaction of the devotees.¹¹

The Divine attributes and form which have been characterised as 'benign' (kalyāṇa) in the Śri-bhāṣya are termed respectively as identity-attributes and identity-form in the Vedārtha-saṅgraha.¹² God's form is His own nature or essence just as His attributes are. It is not made of the three constituents of matter—sattva, rajas and tamas—inasmuch as it is the manifestation of His pure essence, without the admixture of anything else. Even sattva, the most re-

fined aspect of *prakrti*, has nothing to do with the Divine form. The *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* denies the existence of not only *rajas* and *tamas* but also of *sattva* in the Deity.¹⁹

The Divine attributes and the Divine form being essentially inseparable from Divinity, God is said to have a form of consciousness or one of bliss. Although the Deity is a repository of innumerable Divine attributes, and He is even regarded as having a form made of all attributes,¹⁴ yet six of them are held to be most prominent, and hence He is described by the *Agamas* and afterwards by Rāmānuja as 'having a form of six attributes'.¹⁵ The form thus being identical with God, the synonyms for 'pure', 'real', 'conscious' and 'bliss' are used to denote it; and the expression 'Sac-cidānanda-*ghana*' of so common use in devotional literature in India is the most comprehensive of all. The compound word 'Saccidānanda-*ghana*', in which '*ghana*' means crystalline form,¹⁶ signifies pure, conscious, blissful reality in its crystalline form.

Rāmānuja's admission of the identity-form of the Deity is not, however, anything new. For the doctrine of the identity of the Deity and His form was already a part of the Paurāṇic tradition which looked upon all Divine forms as made up of pure consciousness and bliss.¹⁷

Difficulty may arise as to how the Deity feels and knows the external objects while He is devoid of a body and sense-organs which are evolutes of matter. Rāmānuja's reply is simply this that the Deity's activities such as hearing, seeing, etc. do not depend upon the function of the sense-organs, He being essentially omniscient.¹⁸ An embodied soul, of course, requires the aid of sense-organs for its perception of sound etc. inasmuch as its inherent knowledge being dormant in bondage needs external aid for its manifestation. But in case of the Deity, who is never in bondage, no such external aid is necessary for the possibility of His knowledge. Although it is difficult for us to grasp the possibility of perceiving things without the assistance of external sense-organs, yet we must believe in scriptural injunctions which clearly mention that the Deity's activities—perceptual and others—take place without the aid of sense-organs. The Śvaetāśvatara says that He holds without hands, walks without feet, sees without eyes and hears without ears.¹⁹

As a result of the evolutionary process of matter, the eleven organs—mind and others—come out of *sāttvika* *ahaṅkāra*. Since the sense-organs thus originate from *ahaṅkāra*, we cannot attribute them

to the Deity who is devoid of all elements of prakṛti. Divine form then is non-material, a form of bliss and consciousness. A material body indeed comprises flesh and blood which are products of food. But the Deity is not made of blood, flesh, marrow, bones and the like.²⁰ He needs no food for its sustenance. Nor are there in Him changes such as birth, growth and decay. We should not extend the concomitance of human body with blood and flesh to the Divine form also. That is applicable only to those bodies which are material and born of prakṛti. Just as we cannot apply that concomitance to a statue of stone where form exists without blood and flesh ; similarly it is not applicable to the Divine form which is a shape of pure reality. Just as stone is the material cause of a statue (carved out of stone) whose different parts are nothing but stone and which does not depend on blood and flesh for its existence ; similarly the stuff of the Divine form is pure consciousness, its different limbs being nothing but consciousness, not depending on blood and flesh for its existence. Blood and flesh help the gross body only, but the Deity does not take up even causal and subtle bodies, not to speak of a gross one. He is devoid of the threefold material bodies, but has a form of His own essential attributes. There is nothing ugly in that most elegant form. To attribute to it anything ugly is as absurd as to attribute pungence to a salt-crystal or bitterness to a crystal of sugar.

Rāmānuja holds that the Deity is formless only in the sense that He has no material form. But He has assumed a form which is Divine, most beautiful and beyond description. The sages spend their lives in meditating upon it. According to the Viśiṣṭādvaita tradition, the Divine form is said to be made up of Śuddha-sattva. The word 'śuddha-sattva' needs an explanation which is given below.

Śuddha-sattva, the stuff of the Divine Form

The word 'Śuddha-sattva' is compound of 'śuddha' (an adjective) and sattva' (a noun). In philosophical discussions the word is used to denote (a) the thinking faculty in its pure aspect and (b) the first of the three qualities of matter in its purity. I need not say anything as regards its use in the former sense, but shall restrict my discussion to its use in the latter sense only.

The followers of the Sāṅkhya system declare that pure sattva stands for that condition of matter in which sattva predominates over the other two qualities (viz rajas and tamas). The different aspects of

matter are characterised with reference to that particular quality of matter which is predominant at a particular time.

Sankhya being atheistic, the question of the application of the word 'Suddha-sattva' to God does not arise in that system. *Prakṛti* sattva, a synonym for *sudha-sattva* is, however, found to have been used by Vyāsa in his commentary to *Yoga-sūtras*, a system of philosophy collateral with Sankhya.²¹ Yoga admits God's omniscience on the assumption that He is in eternal association with pure sattva or sattva in its highest perfection which, according to this system of philosophy, gives maximum knowledge.

In monistic Vedānta, *Māyā* is another name for *suddha-sattva*. The followers of this school maintain that *prakṛti* has two phases—(a) one whose sattva remains in its purity and (b) the other where its purity is tarnished by the presence of *rajas* and *tamas*. The former is called *māyā* and the latter, *avidyā*.²² *Māyā* and *avidyā* are adjuncts of God and man respectively. This distinction between *Māyā* and *Avidyā* was drawn by later scholars of the Advaita school. Whereas Śankara used both *māyā* and *avidyā* as synonyms, pure sattva as conceived by later Advaita Vedānta signifies Sattva in isolation from *rajas* and *tamas*. So according to this school of thought, it is not from *suddha-sattva* but from matter dominated by *tamas* that the five elements evolve.²³ Man being associated with *avidyā*, his body is material and made of five elements, whereas God, in so far as He is associated with *māyā*, has a body which is non-elemental and made of *suddha-sattva* or *māyā*. This *suddha-sattva* is sometimes called *viśuddha-sattva* also. Śankara believed in the possibility of God's assuming a form of *māyā* for the sake of showing kindness to the religious aspirants.²⁴

Nimbarka has unequivocally stated in his *Dasa-slokī* that the stuff of which supernatural beings are made is also inert.²⁵ Puruṣottama, a commentator on Nimbarka, adds that the forms of God, the eternal souls and the emancipated souls are made of supernatural stuff.²⁶

Rāmānuja holds that God's form is supernatural and Divine. According to him, God's form is made of omniscience, strength, sovereignty, constancy, power and lustre. I do not remember to have come across any statement of his wherein he regarded God's form as made up of *suddha-sattva*, although many students of his philosophy attribute this view to him. Dr. M. N. Sircar says in his 'Comparative Studies in Vedāntism', "We confess we cannot

understand what kind of substance Rāmānuja's śuddha-sattva is".²⁷ But he never refers to Rāmānuja's own statement on the subject of Śuddha-sattva.

Those who have not studied Vaiṣṇava literature are often misled by the concept of śuddha-sattva. The Vaiṣṇavas, therefore, sometimes use the concept of śuddha-tattva which indeed expresses more clearly the nature of the content of God's form and His eternal abode.

Lokācārya, a leader of Tengalai school, holds that śuddha-sattva is unconscious (acit) and informs that while some took it to be self-luminous, others did not believe in its self-luminosity.²⁸ Veṅkaṭanātha, a leader of Vadgalai school, however, conceives it to be a self-luminous entity of objective nature (parāk ajada) and tells us about those who did not hold it to be self-luminous. He has given and refuted the third alternative view of those who say that śuddha-sattva is primarily inert but is figuratively called non-inert.²⁹

Dr. Roma Bose (now Roma Chowdhury) has shown in her book on Nimbārka that Rāmānuja's śuddha-sattva is inert. Here is an incomplete statement, for it does not embody any reference to Veṅkaṭanātha's view which holds that Śuddha-sattva is self-luminous.

Mahamahopādhyāya Gopinātha Kavirāja, in his Hindi article published in Dvivedi Abhinandana Grantha, however, says: 'The followers of Rāmānuja could not transcend the sphere of sattva. Although they have admitted a viśuddha-sattva and have held it to be different from the mundane sattva, yet they maintain its inert nature. Certainly some erudite followers of Rāmānuja speak of it as non-inert, but many learned scholars of the Rāmānuja sect admit its inertness.' Thus Kavirāja has mentioned the two views, although he too has not referred to the third alternative.

It is now necessary to consider whether there is any difference of opinion between Rāmānuja and post-Rāmānuja Viśiṣṭādvaitins on this point. Just as all those who believe in monism are not at one with Śaṅkara on all details, similarly all those who believe in qualified monism do not completely agree with Rāmānuja. This is evident from the division of the Rāmānuja Sect into two sections. Rāmānuja himself regarded the Divine form as God's svarūpa ; but some of his followers came to treat it as distinct from Him and yet as non-inert, while others believed that it belongs to the category of inert entities.

It is worth noticing in this connection that all the writers belonging to the same school of Indian thought do not agree with one another on all points. While discussing the origin of the world from Brahman, different philosophers of the Advaita Vedānta school have put forward different views. Writers on Indian Philosophy have very often overlooked such things, and the result has been a lack of the chronological development of views. Strictly speaking, we are to study philosophical notions according to their chronological history. It is, however, far from me to suggest that no two thinkers of one particular school may be identical in their views. A line of thought in the domain of philosophy may remain intact for centuries : but it may equally happen that changes in philosophical views take place suddenly and quickly. A disciple may introduce a new outlook in the thought of his master. It is, therefore, necessary that philosophical systems should be studied with reference to their historical development.

The Bengal school of Vaiṣṇavism has held śuddha-sattva to be an integral part of the energy of the Supreme. It believes that the Divine form is made of Śuddha-sattva, and that the Deity and the form are identical.³⁰ Śuddha-sattva is therefore supernatural, conscious and a phase of the Divine essence. With regard to the Divine form, the view of the Gaudiya Vaiṣṇavas agree to a large extent with that of Rāmānuja who holds that God's form of excellent beauty and grace is His swarūpa. From this viewpoint Śuddha-sattva means pure existence or essence. The following statement of Rahasyāmnāya is worth noticing in this connection:—

Question—Of what substance is the Deity's person ?

Answer—Of that substance which is Deity's.

Question—Of what substance is the Deity ?

Answer—It is consciousness.³¹

The Excellent Beauty

The various devotional scriptures have vividly delineated the Deity's personal beauty. The Upaniṣads and the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas and the Agamas have all made contributions in this direction. Beautiful is the passage wherein the Chāndogya has compared the Deity's eyes with lotuses opened by the rays of the sun. The simile was used in the hoary past by a sage who beheld the Deity face to face, and the word 'Puṇḍarikākṣa' proved so significant to later thinkers and writers that they repeated it with love and devotion. Even today the daily devotion of the followers of the Mādhyandina

school in Northern India, begins with a reference to Pūñdarikākṣa i.e. one whose eyes are as beautiful as lotuses.* Ācārya Rāmānuja has also described the personal beauty of the Deity at various places in his works. The following is a specimen :—

Having lustre like a mountain of melted gold ; emitting rays like a hundred of thousand suns ; with eyes as pure and broad as the petals of a lotus opened by the rays of the sun and blooming on a clean stem growing in deep water; having bow-like curved brows; splendid forehead, pretty nose, smiling coral lips, rosy and glossy cheeks, conch-shaped neck, comely ears, plump and massive arms; adorned with fingers reddened by very fine and red palms ; having a thin waist but a broad chest; with due proportion on the whole person ; with heavenly beauty beyond description ; with a lovely colour ; having feet as charming as two blossoming lotuses ; putting on a yellow garment befitting His form ; decorated with illustrious, innumerable, wonderful, eternal, divine ornaments such as diadem, ear-rings, necklace, kaustubha-gem, armlets, bracelets, anklets and girdle ; decorated by a conch (Pāñcajanya), a discus (Sudarśana), a mace (Kaumodaki), a sword (Nandaka), a bow (Śārṅga), a footmark on chest (Śrivatsa), and a garland of sylvan flora (vanamāla) ; captivating the eyes and minds of all by His boundless, excellent beauty ; filling all the beings—moving as well stationary—by the nectar of His graceful elegance ; possessing most wonderful, incomprehensible, eternal youth ; as delicate as the blossoming smile of a flower ; perfuming all the quarters with His sacred, sweet scent ; whose very nature transcends the three regions ; interviewing the devotees with a look replete with compassion, love and sweetness ; the best of all persons ; whose sports are creation, sustenance and destruction of the entire universe ; in whom there is no tinge of what is despicable ; abode of all auspicious qualities ; different from all that does not constitute His own real Self ; the Great Soul ; such is Para Brahma Nārāyaṇa.³²

To the question why the Lord assumed the form described above, Rāmānuja replies in the Śrī-bhāṣya by saying that it is His own desire to have it.³³ The author of the Śrī-bhāṣya-vārtika reiterates the same point.³⁴

Rāmānuja's description of the Divine form is based mainly on the authority of the Purāṇas and the Āgamas.³⁵ The Bhāgavata has recorded many such descriptions. One, for instance, is contained in the advice of Nārada to prince Dhruva.³⁶ Some of the phrases

*Apavitraḥ pavitro vīśa sarvāvasthān gato pi vīśa, yaḥ smaret Pūñdarikākṣam sa
bāhyābhyantaraḥ śuciḥ.

used by Rāmānuja in his description of the form of the Deity seem to be a faithful copy of those of his teacher occurring in the Stotra-ratna, and the teacher also appears to have composed them under the influence of a hymn in the Brahma-tantra. A comparative study of the phrases makes this supposition quite probable.³⁷

Such a graceful description of the personal beauty of the Supreme Person is not a mere creation of imagination. Rāmānuja says that the scriptures describe the form of the Deity, because He has a form, and not because they want to ascribe a form to the formless One.³⁸ Like Rāmānuja other Vaiṣṇava ācāryas also ascribe a most beatiful form to the Deity.³⁹

The beautiful colour

The colour of the Diety is blue, and Rāmānuja says that He is as blue as a cloud.⁴⁰ The Sanskrit word for blue is nila, and the lexicon enumerates several words as its synonyms, hence we sometimes find in devotional literature the word ŚYĀMA used in place of nila and vice versa.⁴¹ Blueness of the Divine person is referred to, time and again, in the scriptures. The Mahābhārata tells us that His colour is similar to that of a flower of hemp of flex (atasi).⁴² Even His descents (avatāras) have the same colour. Ths Viṣṇupurāṇa as well as the Bhāgavata compared the colour of the Deity respectively to that of a blue lotus and a cloud, when He appeared before Devaki and Vasudeva.⁴³ His devotees similarly conceive the Diety as having a colour similar to that of a sapphire, the neck of a peacock or the cloud-less sky in the autumn.⁴⁴

The aural rays emanating from the Deity's form are of golden hue, hence He is sometimes described by the scriptures as of golden colour.⁴⁵ On account of the presence of golden aura around Śri Rāma's face, Śri Sītā, during her exile in Lākṣā, enquired of Hanumān whether her husband's face kept up its golden colour in her absence.⁴⁶ And prior to her enquiry, Hanumān also had referred to Rāma's golden hue.⁴⁷ The colour of the Diety's form is primarily blue, but it is sometimes depicted as golden on account of the aura. Sometimes the aura is so radiant that the blue colour appears to be a little lighter as is the case with the colour of the eastern sky earlier than the day dawns. It is at that time that the Deity's person becomes as beatiful as a thick cloud whose colour is not as blue as that of the sky. And in the proximity of Goddess Lakṣmī, the sapphirine blue colour of the Deity appears to be as green as an emerald. Śri being golden, her colour reflects on Him with the result that He assumes a velvety

green complexion.⁴⁸ Although the Deity assumes other colours also in His emanatory forms,⁴⁹ His principal colour is blue. The classical Sanskrit literature has many references to the Lord's blue colour. Kalidāsa has, for instance, compared in *Meghadūta* the colour of the cloud to that of the Deity.⁵⁰

The Ever-budding Youth

In a passage of *R̥gveda* the Deity has been depicted as young despite His being the most ancient in age.⁵¹ Although the Supreme Being is the oldest person, yet He ever looks young. On the basis of such testimony Rāmānuja describes the Deity to be possessed of a youth which is eternal, unimaginable, peculiar and divine.⁵² His teacher, Yāmuna, did the same, as is evident from the eulogy composed by him in praise of Viṣṇu. In fact, both Yāmuna and Rāmānuja emphasized the youthfulness of the Deity on the authority of the scriptures.⁵³

Not only in the Vedic but also in the Paurāṇic literature, Viṣṇu is almost always delineated as a youth. Vyāsa ascribes fresh youth to the Lord, as is clear from the description of the Deity given by Kapila to his mother, Devahūti, in the *Bhāgavata*.⁵⁴ Fresh youth is KAIŚORA in Sanskrit, and in the light of Kaiśora we can take the word 'taruṇa' (used in another passage⁵⁵) to mean one in fresh youth. Kaiśora is, in fact, the best of all ages and this must be the reason why the Deity has been described in another passage of the *Bhāgavata* as 'having a very handsome age'.⁵⁶ This handsome age cannot be any other than Kaiśora.

In another stanza of the *Bhāgavata*, the Divine angels have been represented as 'having a new age'.⁵⁷ The new age of the angels can easily be understood to mean kaiśora. The angels being similar in looks to the Deity, we can infer that the Deity's age is also new. Rūpa Goswāmi of the Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava School says God generally appears as KIŚORA to all His devotees.⁵⁸ An age near about fifteen is called Kaiśora at which the Deity has the most charming form. 'New age', 'handsome age' and 'budded youth'—the expressions used to denote the age of the Deity tend to indicate that the Deity is essentially youthful. Indian iconology reveals that sculptural images of Viṣṇu invariably present the Deity in His prime youth which is in strict accordance with the description of His form contained in the scriptural texts which Rāmānuja held in the highest esteem.

The presence of Śri on the Divine Person

The Deity's person is the permanent abode of Śri⁶⁹ who is the energy essential to Him.⁷⁰ The word 'Lakṣmi' is synonymous with 'Śri' as is revealed by the Paurāṇic literature.⁷¹ The Rgveda alludes to Her as the ever-joyous spouse of Viṣṇu.⁷² The Śri-sūkta depicts Her as golden in colour, most lustrous and beautiful, with lips adorned with a smile and with eyes, hands and feet as charming as lotuses.⁷³ Yellow robes are dear to Her.⁷⁴ She holds two lotuses in Her upper hands. Her lower right hand assures fearlessness to the devotees, while Her lower left one is in a benedictory pose.⁷⁵ She is decked with various ornaments ranging from the tinkling anklets on the feet to the majestic diadem upon Her hair. She sits on a lotus-seat, and the chariot is Her favourite conveyance. She is merciful, generous, renowned, adored even by the gods, invincible, bestower of riches, the mother of the universe. Invoked by names such as Mādhavī, Mādhava-priyā, Hari-vallabhā, viṣṇu-patni, Viṣṇu-priya-sakhī, Rāmā and Indirā, she fulfils the desires of Her devotees by granting them food and raiment, cows and horses, wives and progeny, friends and relations, health and longevity. She helps the devotees by casting Her purifying gracious look on them and strengthening thereby their devotion to the Deity.

Though beheld in a separate form, She is part and parcel of the Deity. "The two, Iṣvara and Śri, are one ontologically."⁷⁶ He is never without Her. As Viṣṇu is all-pervading, so is Lakṣmi.⁷⁷ She comes with Him in His descents (avatāra) too.⁷⁸ She is Sītā when He is Rāma, and She is Rukmini when He is Kṛṣṇa. When He appears as a god among gods, She manifests herself as a goddess; and when He comes as a man among men, She too appears in a human form.

Both Śri and Viṣṇu are one but appear in two forms for the sake of the devotees. According to the Rāmāyaṇa, She is non-different from Him as lustre is from the sun.⁷⁹ The Jayākhyā-saṃhitā says that She is non-different from Him as the waves are from the ocean.⁸⁰ Viewed separately they are the father and the mother of all beings. Besides, She is declared by some of the scriptures to be permanently resident on His bosom, in a miniature form⁸¹; Hence the Deity is known as 'Śri-nivāsa' which name of the Deity Rāmānuja has mentioned in the initial stanza of his Śri-bhāṣya.⁸²

Venkaṭanātha of the Vadgalai school held Śri and Viṣṇu to be 'twofold self which is one in two and two in one'. For him, Śri is

infinite. But Lokācārya of the Tengalai school opposes this view by arguing that the admission of the existence of two infinites contradicts monotheism. He therefore holds that Śrī is finite like a jīva, though She is ever free.⁷³

The conception of Śrī is as old as that of Viṣṇu. The Yajur-veda states that Śrī and Lakṣmī are the two spouses of the Deity,⁷⁴ and the Agamic literature has referred to more than two. The Bhāradvāja Saṁhitā enjoins that the Deity should be contemplated in association with Śrī, Bhū and Līlā.⁷⁵ These three perhaps represent the Deity's cit (knowledge), sat (existence), and ānanda (bliss) aspects respectively. The Jayākhya-saṁhitā makes mention of four : Lakṣmī, Kīrti, Jayā and Māyā.⁷⁶ The Paurāṇic literature gives a longer list of such names. The Bhāgavata enumerates twelve : Puṣṭi, Śrī, Kīrti, Tuṣṭi, Ila, Urjā, Vidyā, Ayidya, Śakti and Māyā.⁷⁷ All these various names enumerated in the Agamas and the Purāṇas are so many aspects of Lakṣmī. Again, Lakṣmī is although apparently different from Viṣṇu, yet essentially She is one with Him. The Jayākhya-saṁhitā counsels the devotee to meditate upon these forms —Lakṣmī and others—as emanations of the Deity.⁷⁸

References

1. यः सर्वज्ञः सर्ववित् । (मुण्डकोपनिषद् १. १. १०)
2. (प्र) सर्वस्य वशी सर्वस्येशानः । (बृहदारण्यक ५.४)
(ग्र) सर्वस्याधिकरितः सर्वमिदं प्रशास्ति । (बृहदारण्यक ५.८)
3. (प्र) आत्मानन्दमयः । (तैत्तिरीयोपनिषद् २.५)
(ग्र) स एको ब्रह्माणः आनन्दः । (२.८)
(इ) आनन्दं ब्रह्माणो विद्वान् । (तैत्तिरीयोपनिषद् २.६)
4. यते रूपं कल्याणतमम् । (ईशोपनिषद् १६)
5. यदा पश्यः पश्यते रूपम्-वराणम् । (मुण्डकोपनिषद् ३. १. ३)
6. तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तत्रूँ स्वाम् । (मुण्डकोपनिषद् ३.२.३)
7. तस्य हैतस्य रूपम् । (बृहदारण्यक २. ३. ६)
8. तस्य यथा कल्पासं पुण्डरीकमेवमक्षिणी । (चान्दोग्य १. ६. ७)
9. यथा ज्ञानादयः परस्य ब्रह्मणः स्वरूपतया निर्देशात्स्वरूपभूतमुण्णास्तथेदमपि रूपं श्रूत्या स्वरूपतया निर्देशात्स्वरूपभूतम् । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः, पृष्ठम् २५०)
10. परस्य ब्रह्मणः प्राकृतहेत्य-मुण्णान् प्राकृतहेत्यदेहसंबन्धं तमूलकमंवशयतासंबन्धं च प्रतिपिद्य कल्याणागुणान् कल्याणरूपं व वदन्ति । (ध्रीभाष्यम् १. १. २१)

11. (ग्र) तदिदं स्वाभाविकमेव रूपमुण्डासकानुप्रहेण तत्प्रतिपत्त्यनुगुणाकारं देवमनुष्यादिसंस्थानं करोति स्वैच्छृंखलेव परमकाहणिको भगवान् ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. २१)

(प्रा) स्वमेव रूपं देवमनुष्यादिसजातीयसंस्थानं कुर्वन्नात्मसंकल्पेन देवादिरूपः संभवामि ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ४.६)

12. कल्याण-गुणानु कल्याणरूपं च । (श्रीभाष्यम्)

13. स्वरूपभूतगुणाः, रूपं……स्वरूपभूतम् । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः)
सत्त्वादयो न सन्तीशे यत्र च प्राकृता गुणाः
स शुद्धः सर्वशुद्धेभ्यः पुमानाद्यः प्रसीदतु । (विष्णुपुराणम्)

14. रागद्वेषातिनियुक्त-समस्तगुणमूर्तिमान् । (सात्त्वतसंहिता ७.२५)

15. (ग्र) पादगुण्यविग्रहं देवं भास्वज्ज्वलनतेजसम् (सात्त्वतसंहिता १. २५)
(ग्र) परं ब्रह्म सम्पूर्णं-पादगुण्यविग्रहः । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. २. ४१)
(इ) सूक्ष्मं तु केवलपादगुण्यविग्रहम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् २. २. ४१)

16. मूर्ती चनः । (अष्टाध्यायी ३. ३. ७७)

17. (ग्र) सत्यज्ञानानन्तानन्दमात्रैकरसमूर्तयः
अस्पृष्ट-भूरिमाहात्म्या अपि ह्यूपनिषद्देशाम् । (भागवत १०. १३. ५४)
(ब) परमानन्दसन्दोहा ज्ञानमात्राद्वच सर्वतः । (वाराह पुराणम्) सटीक-
हरिभक्तिरसामृतसिन्धौ उद्भूतम्, पृष्ठम् १७५

18. (ग्र) न च परस्यात्मनः करणायतं द्रष्टृत्वादिकम्; अपितु स्वभावत एव सर्वज्ञत्वात्
सत्यसंकल्पत्वाच्च स्वत एव । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. २. १६)
(ब) अप्राणो ह्यमना इति मन-आयतं ज्ञानं प्राणायतां स्थिर्ति च ब्रह्मणो
निषेधति ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् १. २. २२)

(स) स च रूपादिसाकात्कारः कर्मतिरोहितस्वाभाविकज्ञानस्य जीवस्य चक्षुरा-
दिकरणजन्मा, परस्य तु स्वत एव । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. २. १६)

19. अपाणिपादो जवनो प्रहीता पश्यत्यच्छुः स शूणोत्यकर्णः । (इवेताश्वतरोपनिषद्
३. १६)

20. न तस्य प्राकृता मूर्तिमीमेदोस्तिवसंभवा । (ईशोपनिषदि रंग-रामानुजमतानुयायि
नारायणकृत प्रकाशिका टीकायामुद्भूतं पुराणावचनम्)

21. योज्जो प्रकृष्ट-सत्त्वोपादानादीश्वरस्य शाश्वतिक उत्कर्षः (योगसूत्रे व्यासभाष्यम्
१.२४)

22. चिदानन्दमय ब्रह्म प्रतिविष्व समन्विता ।
तमोरजः-सत्त्वगुणा प्रकृति द्विविधा च सा ।
सत्त्वशुद्धयविगुद्धिभ्यां मयाविद्यौ च ते मते । (पंचदशी तत्त्वविवेक प्रकरणम्
१५, १६)

23. तमः ग्रधानप्रकृतेस्तद्भोगायेश्वरान्नया ।
विष्टवनतेजोम्बुभुवो भूतानि जज्ञिरे । (पंचदशी तत्त्वविवेक प्रकरणम् १८)

24. स्पात् परमेश्वरस्यापि इच्छावशान्मायामयं रूपं साधकामुग्रहार्थम् ।
(ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् १. १. २०)

25. अप्राकृतं प्राकृतरूपकं च कालस्वरूपं तदचेतनं मतम् ।
माया प्रधानादिपदप्रवाच्यं शुक्लादिभेदाश्च समेति तत्र । (दशदलोकी ३)

26. तच्च भगवदीयानादिसंकल्पात्तस्य तदीयानां नित्यमुक्तानां च भोग्यादिस्वरूपेणानेकरूपम्
तत्र भोग्यं भगवद्विग्रहादि— (वेदान्तरत्न-मंजूषा, पृष्ठम् ३६)

27. Comparative Studies in Vedantism by Mahendra Nath Sircar, page 45

28. अचित् ज्ञानशून्यं विकारास्पदम् । इदं शुद्धसत्त्वं मिथुसत्त्वं सत्त्वशून्यं चेति
त्रिविवरम्...के चनेतत् (शुद्धसत्त्वं) जडं वदन्ति, केचिदजडं वदन्ति । (तत्त्वलयम्)

29. (अ) नित्या भूतिर्मतितिश्चेत्यपरमिह जडामादिमां केविदाहुः (तत्त्वमुक्ताकलापः १.६)
(ब) केचिज्जडामाहुरिति ससूच्यमतभेदोक्तिः । (सर्वार्थसिद्धिः १. ६)
(स) ज्ञानत्वं चेद् रहस्यागमविदितमिति स्वीकृतं नित्यमृतेः,
याङ्गुण्यात्मत्वमेव प्रसजति सह तत्पाठतोतो जडा सा,
तत्संबंधात् कुतिचित् तदुपचरणमित्याहूरेके परे तु,
ज्ञानत्वाजाङ्ग कण्ठोक्त्यनुगुणमवदन् मुख्यतामात्मनीव । (तत्त्वमुक्ताकलापः ३.६२)

30. (अ) मूर्तत्वं प्रतिपत्तव्यं चित्सुखस्यैव रागवत् ।
विज्ञानशनशब्दादि-कीर्तनाच्चापि तस्य तत् ॥ (प्रमेय रत्नावली १.८)

(ब) गोपाल शब्दः खलु परम-कर्मनीय-पादमुखादि-सन्निवेशिनि अभ्रशयामे सबैं शे
वस्तुनि मुख्यः । तस्माज् ज्ञानानन्द-विग्रहानतिरेकिस्वरूपत्वं सिद्धम् ।
(प्रमेयरत्नावल्यां प्रभा टीका)

(स) सच्चिदानन्द-सान्द्रांगशिवदानन्दधनाकृतिः (भक्तिरसामृतसिन्धुः २. १. ६६)

31. किमात्मकैव्या भगवतो व्यक्तिः ?
यदात्मको भगवान् ।
किमात्मको भगवान् ?
ज्ञानात्मकः । (सर्वार्थसिद्धावुद्धृतम् ३.६२)

32. योऽपावादित्यमण्डनान्तवर्ती तसकार्तस्वरगिरिवरप्रभः सहस्रांशुशतसहस्रकिरणो
गम्भीराम्भः-समुदभूतमुष्मृष्टनालरविकरविकक्षित-पुण्डरीकदलामलायतेषण इत्यादि ।
(वेदार्थसंश्लेष्मः, पृष्ठम् २४४-२४८)

33. स तु स्वाभिमतः स्वानुरूपोऽप्राकृत एव । (श्रीभाष्यम् १. १. २१)

34. प्रकृतेविकृते रूपं भूतसंबंधातनामकम् ।
शरीरं सत्पसंकल्प-पुरुषस्येच्छायापि न ।
सम्बन्धोपुरुषार्थत्वाज्जीवानां तु स्वकर्मणाः ।
मुखदुःखादिभोगार्थं बलाद् देहोपियुज्यते ॥
इदं तदा यदि स्याद् वै त्रिगुणः प्राकृतो हरे : ।
देहः स तु स्वाभिमतः स्वानुरूपः सदोऽज्ज्वलः ।
अप्राकृतो हरेस्तेन न दोषः कोपि युज्यते ॥ (श्रीभाष्यवार्त्तिकम् १, १. ७६-८२)

35. (अ) नपद्दो पुण्डरीकाक्षं शंखचक्रगदाधरं (विष्णुपुराणम् १. ४. १२)
(पा) जितन्ते पुण्डरीकाक्षं वामुदेवाभिमतयुते (सात्त्वतसंहिता ७. २५)

36. प्रसादाभिमुखं शशवत् प्रसन्नवदनेशणम् ।

सुनासं सुभ्रुवं चारुकपोलं सुर-सुन्दरम् इत्यादि (भागवतम् ४. ८. ४५-५०)

37. विलास विक्रमाक्रान्तलै लोक्य चरणाम्बुज (ब्रह्मतन्त्रेजितन्तेस्तोत्रम्)
विलास विक्रान्तपरावरालयं नमस्यदातिक्षणये कृतकणम् । (आलवंदार स्तोत्रम् ३३)
(अ)

नारायण नमस्तेस्तु पुण्डरीकायतेकण ।

सुभ्रूललाट सुनस सुस्मिताघरविद्रुम् ॥

पीनवृत्तायतभुज श्रीवत्सकृतभूषण ।

तनुमध्य महावक्षः पद्मानाभ नमोस्तु ते ।

विलासविक्रमाकान्त वैलोक्यचरणाम्बुज ।

नमस्ते पीतवसन स्फुरन्मकर-कुण्डल ॥

स्फुरत-किरीट-केषुर-हार-कौस्तुभभूषण । (ब्रह्मतन्त्रान्तर्गतजितन्ते स्तोत्रम्)
(आ)

निमग्ननार्भं तनुमध्यमुल्लसद्विशालवक्षस्थलशोभिलक्षणम् ।

चकासतं ज्याकिण-कर्कशैं शुभैश्चतुर्भिराजानुविलंविभिर्भूजैः ।

प्रियावतं सोत्पल-कर्णं भूषणश्ल वालकावं धविमदंशसिभिः

उदग्र-पीनांस विलिंव-कुण्डलालकावलीवंधुरकंदु-कंधरम् ॥

मुखश्चिया न्यवकृतपूर्णनिमंलामृतांशुबिम्बाम्बुरुहोज्जवलश्रिम् ।

प्रबुद्ध-मुर्धांबुज-चारुलोचनं सविभ्रमभ्रूलतमुज्जवलाधरम् ॥

शुचिस्मितं कोमलगंडमुन्नसं ललाटपर्यन्तविलंवितालकम्,

स्फुरत-किरीटांगदहार-कण्ठकामणीन्द्र-कांचीगुणानुपुरादिभिः

रथांग-शंखसिगदाधनुवरेलंसतुलस्या वनमालयोज्जवलम् ।

(यामुनाचार्यकृतमालवन्दारस्तोत्रम् ३५-३६)

(इ)

दिव्यालकावली-विराजितम्, प्रबुद्धमुर्धांबुज-चारुलोचनं,

सविभ्रमभ्रूलतमुज्जवलाधरम्; शुचिस्मितं, कोमलगंडमुन्नसं,

ललाटपर्यन्तविलंवितालकम्, उदग्रपीनांसविलंविकुण्डला-

लकावली-वंधुर-कम्बु-कन्धरम् । प्रियावतं सोत्पलकर्णं भूषणा-

इलवालकावं-धविमदंशसिभिश्चतुर्भिराजानुविलिंविभिर्भूजैः;

विराजितम्*****; (रामानुजकृतं वैकुण्ठगद्यम्)

38. न ह्यह्याया देवताया रूपमुदादित्यते, यथा भूतवादि हि शास्त्रम् (वेदाधर्मादः)

39. अवरं मधुरं वदनं मधुरं नयनं मधुरं हसितं मधुरम् ।

हृदयं मधुरं गमनं मधुरं मधुराधिपतेरखिलं मधुरम् ॥

वचनं मधुरं चरितं मधुरं वसनं मधुरं वलितं मधुरम् ।

चलितं मधुरं भ्रमितं मधुरं मधुराधिपतेरखिलं मधुरम् ॥

(बल्लभाचार्यविरचित-मधुराष्ट्रकाव्)

मधुरं मधुरं वपुरस्य विभोर्मधुरं मधुरं वदनं मधुरम् ।

मधुगन्धि मृदुस्मितमेतदहो मधुरं मधुरं मधुरं मधुरम् ॥

(लीलाशुकविरचितं श्रीकृष्णकण्ठामुतम् १.६१)

40. (अ) निरतिशयाश्चयं भूतो नीलतोयदसंकाशः पृष्ठरीकदलामलायतेक्षणः ।
 (वैदार्थसंग्रहः, पृष्ठम् १३१)
 (आ) स्वच्छनीलजीमूतसंकाशमत्युज्ज्वलपीतवाससम् । (वैकुण्ठगच्छम्)

41. कृष्णे नीलासितश्याम-कालश्यामलमेचकाः (अमरकोषः १.५.१४)
 The word 'syama' is used for 'nila' in:—
 इन्दीवर दलश्यामपिन्दिरानन्दकन्दलम् ।
 वन्दारुजनमन्दारं वन्देहं यदुनन्दनम् ॥
 The word 'nila' is used for 'syama' in:—
 स्वकर्णविभ्राजित-कुण्डलोलसत्-
 कपोल-नीलालकमंडिताननाम् ॥ भागवतम् ८.१२।२०॥

42. अतसीपुलसंकाशं पीतवाससमच्युतम् ।
 ये नमस्यन्ति गोविन्दं न तेषां विद्यते भयम् ॥ (महाभारतम् शान्तिपर्वं ४७.६०)

43. (अ) फुलेन्दीवरपत्राभं चतुर्बहुमुदीक्षय तम् ।
 श्रीवत्सवक्षसं जातं तुष्टावानक-दुन्दुभिः (विष्णुपुराणम् ५.३.८)
 (ब) तमदमुतं बालकमम्बुजेक्षणं चतुर्भुजं शशगदामुदामुष्म ।
 श्रीवत्स-लक्ष्मं गलशोभिकौस्तुभं पीताम्बरं सांक्रपयोदसोभगम् ॥
 (श्रीभागवतम् १०.३.६)

44. नील सरोवरह नील मणि नील नीरधर स्याम ।
 लाज्जिंहं तन सोभा निरक्षि कोटि-कोटि सत काम ॥
 (रामायणं तुलसीकृत १.१४६)

45. (अ) आ प्रणवात् सर्वं एव सुवर्णः । (द्वान्द्वोग्य १.६.७.)
 (आ) यदा पश्यः पश्यते रुक्मवर्णम् । (मुण्डकोपनिषद् ३.१.३)

46. कच्चित्त तद् वेमसमानवर्णं तस्यानन्तं पश्यसमानगन्धिं । (रामायणम् ५.३६.२०)

47. स सुवर्णच्छविः श्रीमान् रामः श्यामो महायशाः । (रामायणम् ५.३५.२२)

48. नमो मरकतश्यामवपुषेविगतधिये ।
 केशवाय नमस्तुभ्यं नमस्ते पीतवाससे ॥ (भागवतम् ८.१६.३५)

49. यथा पाण्डवाविकं यथेन्द्रगोपः यथाग्न्यर्चिः यथा
 पुण्डरीकम् यथा सङ्कुद विद्युतम् । (ब्रह्मदारस्यक २.३.६)

50. (अ) त्वय-पादातुं जलमवनते शांगिणी वर्णं चौरे । (पूर्वमेषः ४६)
 (ब) श्यामः पादो बलिनियमनाभ्युद्यतस्येव विष्णोः (पू० मे० ५७)

51. यः पूर्व्याय वेदसे नवीयसे सुमञ्जानये विष्णवे ददाशति (ऋग्वेद १.१५६.२)

52. (प) ग्रविन्त्य-दिव्यादभुत-नित्य-निरवद्य-निरतिश्यायोज्ज्वल्य-सौन्दर्यं-सौगन्ध्यं
 सौकुमार्यं-लावण्य-योवनाद्यनन्त-कल्पाण-गुणानिविदिव्यरूपः ।
 (शरणागतिगच्छम्)

(ब) ग्रविन्त्यदिव्यादभुत-नित्ययोवन-स्वभावलावण्यमयामृतोदिधिम्
 विवः श्रियं भक्तजनेक-जीवितं समर्थं मापतस्त्वमधिकल्पकम् ।
 (यामुनाचार्य-विरचितमालवन्दारस्तोत्रम् ४८)

53. ब्रह्मचरीरो विमिमान ब्रह्मविभिः ।
 युवा कुमारः प्रत्येत्याहवम् ॥ (ऋग्वेद १.१५५.६)

54. सन्तं वयसि कैशोरे भृत्यानुग्रह-कातरम् । (भागवतम् ३.२८.१७)

55. तश्यं रमलीयांगमस्तुष्णोऽलेक्षणाधरम् (भागवतम् ४.८.४६)

56. प्रेक्षणीयं नूलोकस्य सामुरागस्मितेक्षणम् ।
अपीच्यवयसं मत्तमृगेन्द्रोदारविक्रमम् ॥ (भागवतम् १०.५१.२७)

57. सर्वे च तृत्ववयसः सर्वे चारुचतुभुजाः (भागवतम् ६.१.३५)

58. प्रायः किशोर एवायं सर्वभवतेषु भासते । (भवितरसामृतसिन्धुः ३.३.४१)

59. (अ) नारसिंहं वपुः श्रीमान् केशवः पुरुषोत्तमः । (विष्णुसहस्रनाम १६)
यस्य वक्षसि नित्यं वसति श्रीः स श्रीमान् (विष्णुसहस्रनामनि शांकरभाष्यम्)
(ब) महेष्वासो महीभर्ता श्रीनिवासः सर्वां गतिः । (विष्णु सहस्रनाम ३३)
यस्य वक्षस्यनपायिनी श्रीवंसति स श्रीनिवासः (शांकरभाष्यम्)
(स) सर्वलक्षलक्षण्यो लक्ष्मीवान् समितिजयः । (विष्णु सहस्रनाम ५२)
लक्ष्मीरस्य वक्षसि नित्यं वसतीति लक्ष्मीवान् (शांकरभाष्यम्)
(द) श्रीवत्सवक्षः श्रीवासः श्रीपतिः श्रीमांतां वरः । (विष्णुसहस्रनाम ७७)
यस्य वक्षसि श्रीरनपायिनी वसतीति श्रीवासः (शांकरभाष्यम्)
(इ) श्रीधरः श्रीकरः श्रेयः श्रीमौलोकवयाश्रयः । (विष्णुसहस्रनाम ७८)
सर्वभूतानां जननी श्रियं वक्षसि वहन् श्रीधरः (शांकरभाष्यम्)
(ई) तस्याः श्रियस्त्रिजगतो जनको जनन्या ।
वक्षोनिवासमकरोत् परमं विभूतेः ॥ (भागवतम् ८. ८. २५)

(उ) इयामे पुत्रावुरसि शोभितयाश्रिया । (भागवतम् ३. १५. ३६)

(ऊ) पद्माक्षी पद्मनाभोरसि कृतवसतिः पद्मगा श्रीः श्रियै नः । (सौभाग्य लक्ष्म्युपनिषद्)
(ओ) नमस्ये सर्वलोकानां जननीमब्जसंभवाम् ।
श्रियमुन्निद्रपद्माक्षीं विष्णुवक्षस्थलस्थिताम् । (विष्णुपुराणम् १. ६. ११७)

(ओ) तद्वक्षस्थलनित्य-वासरसिकाम् । (वेंकटनाथ विरचित-कनकधाराश्रीलक्ष्मी-स्तवराजः)

60. (अ) अनपायिनी भगवती श्रेयः साक्षादात्मनो हरेः (भागवतम् १२, ११, २०)
(आ) पद्मवनालयां भगवती श्रियं देवीं नित्यानपायिनी……शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ।
(शरणागतिगच्छम्)

61. श्रिया विलोकिता देवाः सप्रजापतयः प्रजाः ॥
शीलादि गुणं सम्पन्ना लेभिरेति विवृतिं पराम् ।
निस्पत्त्वा लोकुपा राजन् निरुद्योगा गतत्रपाः ,
यदा चोपेक्षिता लक्ष्म्या बभूवुद्देत्यदानवाः ॥ (भागवतम् ८. ८. २८-२९)

62. सुमज्जानये विष्णवे ददाशति (कृष्णवेद १. १५६. २)

63. हिरण्यवणीं हरिणीं सुवर्णं रजतलक्ष्मामित्यादि । (श्रीसूक्तम्)

64. समुद्रः पीतकोशेय वाससो समुपाहरत् (भागवतम् ८. ८. १५)

65. (अ) अरुण-कमलसंस्था तद्रजः-पुंजवणी, करकमलधूतेषु भीतियुग्माम्बुजा च
(सौभाग्यलक्ष्म्युपनिषत्)
(आ) भूयाद् भूयो द्विपदाभयवरदकरा तप्तकातंस्वराभा । सौभाग्य लक्ष्म्युपनिषत्)

66. The Philosophy of Visiṣṭādvaita by Srinivasachari, page 387.

67. (अ) नित्यैवेषा जगन्माता विष्णोः श्रीरनपायिनी,
यथा सर्वंगतो विष्णुस्तथैवेष द्विजोत्तम । (विष्णुपुराणम् १, ८, १७)
(ब) त्वयैतद् विष्णुना चाम्ब जगद् व्याप्तं चराचरम् ।
(अग्निपुराणम् २३७, १७)

68. (अ) एवं यदा जगत्स्वामी देवदेवो जनादेनः ।
अवतारंकरोत्येष तदा श्रीस्तत्सहायिनी ।
राघवत्वेभवत् सीता रुक्मिणी कृष्णजन्मनि ।
(विष्णुपुराणम् १. ६. १४२-१४४)
(ब) सीता लक्ष्मीर्भवान् विष्णुः (रामायणम् ६, ११७, २६)

69. अनन्या हि मया सीता भास्करेण यथा प्रभा । (रामायणम् ६. ११८. २०)

70. सूर्यस्य रशमयो यद्गूर्मयश्चाम्बुधेरिव ।
सर्वैश्वर्यं-प्रभावेण कमला श्रीपतेस्तथा । (ज्यारूप्यसंहिता ६. ७८)

71. (अ) का त्वन्या त्वामृते देवि सर्वंयज्ञमयं वपुः ।
अध्यास्ते देवदेवस्य योगिचिन्त्यं गदाभृतः । (अग्निपुराणम् २३७, ६)
(ब) का त्वन्या इत्यादि उपर्युक्त वचनम् । (विष्णुपुराणम् १. ६. १२२)

72. श्रुतिशिरसि विदीप्ते ब्रह्मणि श्रीनिवासे । (श्रीभाष्यमंगलाचरणम्)

73. The Philosophy of Visiṣṭadvaita by Srinivasa Chari, page 167.

74. श्रीश्च ते लक्ष्मीश्च पत्न्या । (यजुर्वेद ३१. २२)

75. चतुर्भुज मुदारांगं द्यामं पद्मनिभेक्षणम् ।
श्रीभूमिलीला-सहितं चिन्तयेच्च सदा हृदि । (भारद्वाजसंहिता ३. ४८)

76. लक्ष्मीः कीर्तिजंया माया देव्यस्तस्याश्रिताः सदा ।
(ज्यारूप्यसंहिता ६. ७७)

पुष्ट्या श्रिया कीर्त्यंजयाखिलद्विभि
नियेव्यमारणं परमेष्ठिनां पतिम् (भागवतम् १०. ८६, ५७)

77. श्रिया पुष्ट्या गिरा कान्त्या कीर्त्या तुष्ट्येलयोजंया,
विद्ययाविद्यया शक्त्या मायया च नियेवितम् । (भागवतम् १०. ३६. ५५)

78. ततो भगवतो विष्णोर्भासा भास्वरविग्रहात् ।
लक्ष्म्यादीनिस्सूता द्यायेत्स्फुलिङ्गनिच्या यथा ॥ (ज्यारूप्यसंहिता १३. १०५. ६)

CHAPTER VII

THE MODES OF DIVINE MANIFESTATION

Part I

The Doctrine of *Avatāra*

Avatāra or *vibhava* is God's descent—The purposes of God's coming—When?—Rāmānuja interprets the word 'mīyā' as God's will or desire—The body of an *avatāra* is divine—Veṅkaṭanātha's view—God may descend on any part of the universe—Descent of Laksmī and other heavenly beings—Lokācārya on the primary and the secondary *avatāra*—Śrinivāsadeva's view—Ahirbudhnya Samhitā, Śrinivāsadeva and Vāsudeva Abhyāṅkara on the number of *avatāras*—Śaṅkara, Maddhva, Vallabha and Rūpa Gosvāmī on the question as to who descends—Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa.

Rāmānuja believes in the Deity's descent on the celestial and terrestrial planes and has expressed his views on the point in his writings. God's coming down to the material plane is called '*avatāra*' in the Purāṇas and '*vibhava*' in the Āgamas.

The question of the manifestation of God, the infinite being, in a finite form is perplexing to logical reasoning. Rāmānuja has, however, dealt with the question in the light of the deliverances of the scriptures. If it is once admitted, as Rāmānuja does admit, on the authority of the scriptures, that the Infinite can have a finite form of divine essence—which indeed amounts to the anthropomorphic attitude towards God, it becomes easy to believe, as Rāmānuja does, that God comes down to live amongst us in the form of an *avatāra*.

Rāmānuja's conception of *avatāra* is not 'the exaltation of human nature to the level of Godhead' as interpreted by Dr. Radhakrishnan who writes: 'When any finite individual develops spiritual qualities... we say that God is born.'¹ According to him, 'the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa is.....the taking up manhood into God',² a view which views divine incarnation as the emancipation of an individual soul. Radhakrishnan indeed admits the possibility of God's descent into flesh i.e. His *avatāra*.³ But 'descent into flesh' suggests that the body which God assumes is made of 'prakṛti', whereas Rāmānuja is,

as we have already observed in the preceding chapter, opposed to this view. For him, the form of an avatāra is not a product of material elements comprised within prakṛti.

God sports on the material plane (Līlā-vibhuti) not only with matter (prakṛti) but also with individual souls who are participating in the sport. In the very beginning of the creation, both conscious and unconscious beings occupy themselves with various activities at the will of God. Evolutionary changes start in the world of the unconscious and contraction and expansion of cognition in the former. Countless are the stages of that contraction and expansion. The teacher of the gods (Bṛhaspati) comes to occupy a high level of cognition, whereas things like plants (vanaspati) stand on a very low level. The individual souls have been, from time immemorial, coming up and going down at different stages; and this process does not cease until they realize their true self and the nature of God. It is only when an aspirant, leading a pure life, reaches the highest stage of worship and feels that life is not worth living without the attainment of Divine vision, that the Deity descends from His ETERNAL PLANE (Vaikunṭha), comes within the easy reach of the devotee and saves him from the anguish of separation.⁴ Such is indeed the primary purpose of the Deity's descent. Whosoever yearns for Him gets Him. The young prince Dhruva performed austerities to have a sight (darsana) of the Lord, and the Lord, descended to Madhuvana to cast His gracious glances on the child.⁵

The secondary purpose of the Divine descent is to punish the wicked,⁶ as is illustrated by the story of Gajendra, the king of the elephants. God saved the Elephant-king from the pangs of death, and put an end to his enemy, the crocodile.⁷ Safeguarding the interest of Vedic dharma is another purpose of God's descent to the mundane plane.⁸

A King, for the sake of good government, needs to encourage good people by rewarding them for their meritorious deeds and to dissuade the wicked from their vicious acts by punishing them. Similarly the need arises for the Supreme Being for His assumption of an avatāra in order that He can establish order in the world by showing kindness to the pure and the innocent and by condemning the sinful.

The culmination of all righteous actions is the vision of the Deity, which is possible only when the jīva's yearning for Him becomes the most intense. Yearning pre-supposes love born of attraction. With a view to attracting the jīvas, the Deity, according to the

Bhāgavata, plans captivating sports which are such that even their description cannot fail to attract their listeners.⁹

There is no hard and fast rule as to when God should appear on the material plane.¹⁰ Whenever dharma is overpowered by adharma, He manifests Himself on earth. The principal descents are traditionally ten, although the number goes up to twenty-two and twenty-four in the Purāṇas¹¹ and still more in the Āgamas.¹²

When, according to Rāmānuja, the Deity descends in a mundane form, people take Him to be an ordinary being born under the influence of karma.¹³ But the Deity is, really, above the karmic influence. Since He is enveloped in Yoga-māyā, His true nature is not obvious to all.¹⁴ He manifests Himself in the forms of celestial and terrestrial beings, but His real nature remains intact.¹⁵ In other words, he does not lay aside His Divine nature in His descents.¹⁶

God comes here of His own accord, says Rāmānuja. It would be interesting to note that to support his view he has interpreted the word 'māyā', occurring in the phrase 'sambhavāmyātma-māyayā' of the Gītā as meaning 'will' or 'desire' and has quoted from the Nighaṇṭu where māyā has been taken to be a synonym for 'will'. Rāmānuja's interpretation differs from that of Śaṅkara who seems to have understood it in the sense of power, although Anandagiri's commentary on Śaṅkara suggests that māyā means illusion, and that God creates an illusory form by His will. According to Śaṅkara,¹⁷ the Deity does not really assume a body; He only seems to the people of His age to be embodied. God, on Śaṅkara's view, is not subject to birth but only appears to be born. The appearance is due to the Divine māyā.

Unlike Śaṅkara and other thinkers of the Advaita School, Rāmānuja has understood the word 'māyā' in the sense of 'will', and maintains thereby that there is nothing but His own desire to compel the Deity to manifest Himself in a finite form.¹⁸

The form assumed by the Deity is His own; hence it cannot but be real. But there is one point worth consideration. The body of an avatāra is Divine, but people mistake it to be as mundane as the body of an ordinary being. Why does the Divine form appear as mundane to mortal beings? This is so owing to the fascinating power of the Deity, replies Veṅkaṭānātha.¹⁹ His meaning is that although the Divine form is real and not illusory, yet the Divine power which is at work charms and infatuates the lookers-on so as to view that form in a different way.

It is not only on this earth that the Deity descends. He may also descend, as necessity arises, in any other part of the cosmic egg. Rāmānuja points out that God comes to live amongst celestial beings and others.²⁰ Once, he adds, God sportively filled in the gap in the celestial genealogy by descending among gods as Upendra, the younger brother of Indra.²¹ Similarly His descent in the solar and lunar dynasties of this earth as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa was to complete, out of His own desire, those genealogies.²² The Purānic literature speaks of several instances of His descent on planes other than the human. The Deity once appeared in the assembly of Brahmā in Satya-loka, in the form of a swan.²³

The form of the Deity in all His descents is non-material (aprākṛta), says Rāmānuja. He quotes in the Śrī-bhāṣya, in corroboration of this view, from the Mahābhārata : 'The body of the Supreme Soul is not a conglomeration of material elements.'²⁴ The Ācārya has repeated his view in the Vedārtha-saṅgraha where he emphasizes that God's form is not made of Prakṛti even in His avatāra as a god and so on.²⁵ Rāmānuja seems to have formed his views on this point on the authority of some Āgamic and Paurānic statements which clearly deny prākṛta forms to the Deity.²⁶

The descent of the Deity is called Divine birth, and commenting on the Gītā 4.9, Rāmānuja says that one who has a real knowledge of the Divine birth attains freedom from birth and death and finally enjoys fellowship with the Lord. With Viṣṇu Lakṣmī descends on earth. They are ontologically one but appear as two. Rāmānuja has quoted in the Vedārtha-saṅgraha a passage from the Viṣṇu-purāṇa according to which She becomes a goddess when Viṣṇu is a god, and assumes the form of a woman when He becomes a man.²⁷ The Purāṇa says that She was Sītā when He was Rāma; She was Rukmini when He was Kṛṣṇa.²⁸ Whenever He comes on earth, She is with Him. The Scriptures say that the Deity's weapons, conveyance, throne etc. also descend. His couch of serpent-coil (Śeṣa), for example, appeared as Lakṣmaṇa; His disc (sudarśana) as Bharata, and His conch (Pāñcajanya) as Śatrughna.²⁹ While Śrī Kṛṣṇa was contemplating to destroy evil and to protect Mathura when it was besieged by Jarāsandha and his forces, two Divine chariots—lustrous and equipped—descended from the sky (the Deity's abode).³⁰ Rāmānuja has quoted another passage from the Rāmāyaṇa to the effect that Rāma's big bow and multifarious arrows followed him, in human shape,³¹ which indicates that the Deity's weapons wait upon Him not only on the Eternal Plane (Vaikuṇṭha) but also descend on earth to serve Him.

Rāmānuja has not considered the number and kinds of avatāra, but his followers have done so on the basis of the Purāṇas and the Āgamas. Tattva-traya, a later work on Vaiṣṇavism, has classified avatāra under two heads—the primary and the secondary.³² Under the first category come those that have non-prākṛtic forms, and reflect true Divine nature. They are worth adoration by those who are desirous of emancipation. The second category includes those that are of a tutelary character, co-existing with, and presiding over, some particular souls. They are not to be worshipped by those who desire salvation.

Śrīnivāsa-dāsa, the author of Yatindra-mata-dipikā, has distinguished several kinds of avatāra such as primary, secondary, complete, partial, and tutelary. He has enumerated ten avatāras. The fish (matsya) took back the Veda from the demon Śankha and gave it to Brahmā. The Tortoise (Kurma) supported the mount Mandara when the milk-ocean was being churned for discovering ambrosia. The Boar (Varāha) saved the earth from the deluge. The Man-Lion (Nara-simha) appeared from the pillar to protect Prahlāda. The Three-strided (Trivikrama) destroyed sin with Gangetic water. Paraśurāma curbed down the wicked rulers. Rāma established righteousness and protected those who were in need of refuge. Balabhadra put an end to the demons such as Pralamba, and Kṛṣṇa showed the way to salvation. Kalkī who is yet to appear will put the sinners to the sword and restore dharma, and thus put an end to the age of Kali. Some do not admit Balabhadra, but recognise Buddha instead and place him after Kṛṣṇa. Others mention Rāma (Balarāma) in place of Kṛṣṇa and add Buddha. There are other phases of each avatāra, says Śrīnivāsa-dāsa, but his point is not very clear. Again, he has referred to thirty-six avatāras beginning with Padma-nābha. Although he has mentioned only thirty-six avatāras headed by Padmanabha, yet the number goes up to 39 in the Ahirbudhnya-samhitā as under:—

1. Padma-nabha, 2. Dhruva, 3. Ananta, 4. Śaktyātmā,
5. Madhusūdana, 6. Kapila, 7. Viśvarūpa, 8. Vihaṅgama,
9. Baḍavī-vaktra, 10. Dharma, 11. Vāgiśvara, 12. Ekāṁbhonidhi-śayī, 13. Kamaṭheśvara, 14. Varāha, 15. Narasimha, 16. Piyuṣaharana, 17. Śripati, 18. Kāntātmā, 19. Rahujit, 20. Kālanemighna,
21. Pārijatahara, 22. Lokanābha, 23. Śāntātmā, 24. Dattātreya,
25. Nyagrodha-śayī, 26. Eka-śrīgatana, 27. Tri-vikrama, 28. Nara,
29. Nārāyaṇa, 30. Hari, 31. Kṛṣṇa, 32. Paraśurāma, 33.—36. Rāma in his fourfold aspect, 37. Vedavid, 38. Kalkī and 39. Pātāla-Śayita.

Thus we see that the *Samhitā* has reckoned the number of *avatāra* as thirtynine, but Śrinivāsadāsa reduced the number to thirtysix. Vāsudeva Abhyāṅkara who has commented on Śrinivāsadāsa holds that this reduction of the number is due to the fact that Śrinivāsadāsa has excluded Kapila, Dattātreya and Paraśurāma from the list perhaps on the understanding that these three are not on a par with the remaining *avatāras*. But this view seems to be hardly correct, for Śrinivāsadāsa has not really excluded these three *avatāras* from the list. Paraśurāma for example is not excluded from his list; nay Paraśurāma is one of the principal *avatāras* according to him. It would, therefore, be more correct to say that Śrinivāsadāsa intended to exclude Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna, because they may be included in Rāma.

According to Śaṅkara, it is Viṣṇu, the Supreme Reality as associated with māyā, that appears in various forms. It is He who came to Devakī and Vāsudeva as their son.³³ According to the cult of Trimūrti also, Viṣṇu, as a member of the triad, has his incarnation as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and so on.

Maddhva, like Rāmānuja, held Viṣṇu to be the source of all *avatāras*,³⁴ but Nimbārka assigned the function of assuming various *avatāra*-forms to Kṛṣṇa, the ultimate Reality according to Dvaitādvaita school.³⁵

Unlike Rāmānuja, Vallabha held the *avatāras* to be descents of Antaryāmi (Puruṣa or Bhūmī)³⁶. According to the Śuddhādvaita school, the ultimate Reality is fourfold.³⁷ : The Supreme Person or Kṛṣṇa is the first, the Immutable with attributes is the second, the Immutable without attributes is the third, and the Immanent is the fourth. The forms e.g. that of 'Fish' are assumed by the fourth, while Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person Himself. The forms of fish etc. are called Līlāvātāras i.e., forms assumed by the Immanent for the sake of sport,³⁸ while there are three Guṇāvātāras also. God has three supernatural attributes under the names of sattva, rajas and tamas which are not to be confused with the material elements.³⁹ When God takes up these three attributes, He becomes Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva respectively. So the position of Viṣṇu in Śuddhādvaita is not the same as in Viśiṣṭādvaita, although He is considered to be superior to Brahmā and Śiva inasmuch as He resembles Kṛṣṇa with regard to yellow garment, sylvan garland and so on.⁴⁰

According to Bengal Vaiṣṇavism, Kṛṣṇa—and not Viṣṇu—is the main source of all *avatāras*.⁴¹ Rūpa Gosvāmi explicitly says so, and commenting on him Jīva Gosvāmi has quoted the benedictory verse

from the Gita-Govinda where salutation is offered to Kṛṣṇa who is said to have assumed ten forms of Fish and so on.⁴² For Rāmānuja, Kṛṣṇa is, however, an avatāra of Viṣṇu, the Supreme.

References

1. The Bhagavadgītā by Radhakrishnan, page 32.
2. Ibid, page 36.
3. Ibid, page 32, footnote.
4. महर्षिनाहृते स्वात्मधारण-पोषणादि सुखमलभमानाः (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ४, ८) ।
5. मधोर्वन्नं भूत्यदिहक्षया गतः (भागवतम् ४, ६, १) ।
6. तद्विपरीक्षानां विनाशाय च (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ४, ८) ।
7. ग्राहाद् विपाटितमुखादरिणा गजेन्द्रं सम्पदयतां हरिरमूमुखदुक्षियाणाम् (भागवतम् ८, ३, ३३) ।
8. क्षीरणस्य वैदिक-धर्मस्य मदाराधनरूपस्याराध्यस्वरूप-प्रदर्शनेन तस्य स्वापनाय (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ४, ८) ।
9. भजते ताहशीः क्रीडा याः श्रुत्वा तत्परो भवेत् (भागवतम् १०, ३३, ३७) ।
10. (अ) न कालनियमो इस्मत्सम्भवस्य (गीतायां रा० भाष्यम् ४, ७) ।
(आ) कृतत्रेतादि-युग-विशेष-नियमोऽपि नास्ति (पूर्वोक्तम् ४, ८) ।
11. यत्रोद्धतः शितितलोद्धरणाय विभ्रत् ।
क्रौडीं तनुं सकलयज्ञमयीमनन्तः ।
अन्तर्महारणं उपागतमादि-दैत्यं ।
तं दंष्ट्या इद्रिमिव वज्रधरो ददार, इत्यादि (भागवतम् २, ७, १) ।
12. (अ) विभवः पश्यनाभाद्यास्त्रिशब्दव नव चैव हि ।
(आ) त्रिशब्दव नव चैवेते पश्यनाभादयो मताः ॥ (अहित्वृद्ध्य संहिता) ।
13. इदानीं कर्मविशेषाऽज्जन्म-विशेषं प्राप्य व्यक्तिमापून्नं प्राप्तं मामबुद्धयो मन्यन्ते (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ७, २) ।
14. क्षेत्रज्ञासाधारण-मनुष्यत्वादि-संस्थान-योगाल्यमायया समावृतोऽहं न सर्वस्य प्रकाशः (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ७, २५) ।
15. स्वमेव स्वभावमधिष्ठाय स्वैर्वंव रूपेण स्वेच्छया सम्भवामि (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ४, ६) ।
16. (प्र) सर्वमैश्वरं स्वभावमजहृदेव (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ४, ६) ।
(आ) स्वेच्छातः सत्यरूपो विभुरवतरति स्वान्मुखोघाननुजभन्तु (तत्त्वमुक्ताकलाप ३, ६, ६) ।

17. ईश्वरो नित्यशुद्धबुद्धमुक्त-स्वभावोऽपि सतु स्वमायया देहवानिव जात इव च
लोकानुग्रहं कुर्वन्निव च लक्ष्यते ॥
(गीतायां शांकरभाष्योपोद्धारः) ।

18. (अ) आत्ममायया आत्मीयया माययो । मायया वयुनं ज्ञानमिति ज्ञानपर्यायोऽत्र
मायाशब्दः । तथा चाभियुक्तप्रयोगः मायया सततं वेत्ति प्राणिनां च शुभाशुभम्
इति । आत्मीयेन ज्ञानेनात्मसंकल्पेनेत्यथः । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ५, ६) ।
(आ) स्वलीलया जगदुपकाराय स्वेच्छावतारः । वेदार्थं संग्रहः पृ० १८१)

19. मोहनशक्त्या मनुष्यादिसजातीय-शंकास्पदेषु विभवेषु
(सर्वर्थसिद्धिः तस्वमुक्ताकलापे) ।

20. (अ) अस्य देवादिरूपेणावतारेषु वेदार्थं संग्रहः पृ० ११६) ।
(आ) भागवतम् १०, १४, २०) (इ) भागवतम् १०, २, ४०) ।

21. लीलया देवसंस्था-पूरणं कुर्वत उपेन्द्रत्वं परस्यैव (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृ० १८१) ।

22. (अ) सूर्यंवंशोद्भवराजसंस्था-पूरणं कुर्वतः परस्यैव ब्रह्मणो दाशरथि-रूपेण
स्वेच्छावतारः (पूर्वोक्तम् १८२) ।
(आ) सोमवंश-संस्थापूरणं कुर्वतो भगवतो भूभारावतारणाय स्वेच्छया वसुदेव-
गृहेऽवतारः (पूर्वोक्तम् १८२) ।

23. स मामविन्ययहेवः प्रश्नपार तितीर्थ्या, तस्याहं हंसरूपेण सकाशमगमं तदा
(भागवतम् ११, १३, १६) ।

24. महाभारतेष्यवतार-रूपस्याप्यप्राकृतत्वमुच्यते न भूतसंघसंस्थानो देहोऽस्य परमात्मनः
(थी भाष्यम् १, १, २१) ।

25. अस्य देवादि-रूपेणावतारेष्वपि न प्राकृतो देहः वेदार्थं संग्रहः) ।

26. (अ) निष्वेतनात्मकशरीर-गुणैश्च हीनः नारदपांचरावम् ।
(आ) सर्वे नित्याः शाश्वताश्च देहास्तस्य परात्मनः, हानोपादानरहिता
नैव प्रकृतिजाः क्वचित् (महावाराहपुराणम्, सटीकहरिभित्तरसामृत-
सिन्धाबुद्धतम्, पृ० १७५) ।

27. देवत्वे देवदेहेयं मनुष्यत्वे च मानुषी, विष्णोदैहानुरूपां च करोत्येषात्मनस्तनूम्
(विष्णुपुराणम् १, ६, १४५) ।

28. राघवत्वेऽभवत्सीता रुक्मिणी कृष्णजन्मनि ।
अन्येषु चावतारेषु विष्णोरेषा ऽनपायिनी ॥ (विष्णुपुराणम् १, ६, १४५)

29. शेषो वभूवेश्वर-तल्पभूतो सीमितिरत्यद्भुत-भोगधारी ॥
वभूवतुदचक्रदरी च दिव्यौ कैकेयिसूनुर्लवण्णान्तकदच ।
(अध्यात्मरामायणम् उत्तरकाण्डम् ६, ५७) ।

30. एवं व्यायति गोविन्द आकाशात्सूर्य-वर्चसौ ।
रथाबुपस्थितो सदा: ससूतो सपरिच्छदौ ।
आयुधानि च दिव्यानि पुराणानि यद्व्यया ॥ (भागवतम् १०, १५, ११, १२) ।

31. शरा नानाविधाश्चापि धनुरायतविघ्नम् ।
अन्वगच्छन्त काकुत्स्यं सर्वे पुरुष-विग्रहाः ॥ (रामायणम् ७, १०६, ७) ।
32. तत्राप्राकृत-विग्रहा अजहस्त्वभाव-विभवा दीपादुत्पन्न-दीपवत् स्थिता मुख्य-
प्रादुर्भावाः सर्वे मुमुक्षुणामुपास्याः । गौणप्रादुर्भावाः सर्वेऽहंकार-युक्त-जीवाधिष्ठा-
तृत्वान्मुमुक्षुणामनुपास्याः (तत्त्वत्रयम्) ।
33. जगतः स्थिरिं परिपिपालयिषुः स आदिकर्ता नारायणाश्चयो विष्णुर्भीमस्य
ब्रह्मणो ब्राह्मणत्वस्य रक्षणार्थं देवक्यां वसुदेवादेन किल सम्बूद्ध-
(गीतायां शांकरभाष्ये उपोद्घातः) ।
34. अवतारादयो विष्णोः सर्वे पूरणाः प्रकीर्तिताः
(माधवबृहदभाष्यम्, भारतीयदर्शने उद्धृतम्, पृष्ठम् ४८१) ।
35. व्यूहांगिनं ब्रह्म परं वरेष्यं ध्यायेम कृष्णं कमलेक्षणं हरिम (दशश्लोकी ४) ।
उपलक्षणावर्तोऽपि व्यूहशब्दोऽप्यावतार-मूर्तीनाम् । तथा च व्यूहा अवताराश्चांगानि
तान्येव विद्यन्ते यस्य तमनन्त-मूर्तिकम्, इति दशश्लोकी-व्याख्या वेदांत-रत्न-
मंजूषा ।
36. एते चांशकलाः पुंस इत्यत्रैषेवान्तर्यामी पुंशवदेनोक्तः
(प्रमेयरत्नार्णवः पृष्ठम् २४) ।
37. मूलरूपस्य चत्वारि रूपाणि (पूर्वोक्तम् पृष्ठम् १५) ।
38. अयं हि सर्वेषां लीलावताराणां मत्स्यादीनां मूलम् (पूर्वोक्तम्, १४) ।
39. त्रयाणामप्यप्राकृत्व-निरूपणात् (पूर्वोक्तम्, १४) ।
40. विष्णौ चतुर्भुजाद्याकाराणां पीताम्बर-बनमालादीनां पुरुषोत्तम-धर्माणां बहूनां
प्रकटत्वेन ब्रह्मशिवापेक्षयोत्कृष्टत्वं जयम् (पूर्वोक्तम्, १५) ।
41. अवतारावली-बीजमवतारी निगद्यते (भवितरसामृतसिन्धुः २, १, ३२) ।
42. दशाकृतिकृते कृष्णाय तुम्यं नमः (गीतगोविन्दम्) ।

THE MODES OF THE DIVINE MANIFESTATION

PART II

The Theory of Emanation (Vyuha)

God's manifestation in relation to the creation etc. of cosmos—Pradyumna—Aniruddha—Saṅkarṣaṇa—Viśudeva—Further emanations—Saṅkara and Rāmānuja on the system of Vyūha and the validity of the Pāñcarātra—What is 'Līlā-vibhuti'?

It has already been noted that the purpose of the Deity's descent on the mundane plane is protection of the good and punishment of the wicked. He comes to live amongst us to establish what is good and to destroy what is evil. In such activities of God one finds Him sporting in his dealings with the individual souls. The Pāñcarātra school, however, draws a sharp distinction between an avatāra and a vyūha. The former is concerned with Divine sport (Līlā) with the individual souls ; the latter, with the cosmos. The manifestations of God in the form of Rāma, Kṛṣṇa etc. are called avatāras or vibhavas ; whereas the forms assumed by Him in the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe are called vyūhas (emanations). Rāmānuja has referred to the emanations of the Deity.¹ Although he has not worked out the details of the theory of Vyūha, yet it is interesting to notice the Pāñcarātra view on the point.

The Deity in a sense transcends the material world, and so is beyond human comprehension. But it should not be inferred that He is only beyond and not within the world. His transcendence is not incompatible with His immanence. In fact, He is partly transcendent and partly immanent. His glory is thus two-fold. Hence the distinction between His Tripad-vibhuti, also called Nitya-vibhuti (the Eternal aspect) and His Ekapad-vibhuti, also called Līlā-vibhuti (the sportive aspect). The Deity is creator, sustainer and destroyer in the latter aspect. He is self-satisfied and is delighted in Him-self. His sports with prakṛti are eternal, without a beginning and without an end. Man cannot fathom, with his limited capacity, the vast expanse of prakṛti, the field of His great play. None can comprehend the ceaseless creation and dissolution of countless worlds. None can

understand when this sport began and when it will end. So man rests content with the belief that the Divine sport has been at work from eternity and will continue till eternity.

Rāmānuja says that this world is full of inscrutable mysteries, endless and manifold in character.² The Mahā-Nārāyaṇopaniṣad speaks of countless cosmic eggs in the universe.³ The Bhāgavata has mentioned that myriads of cosmic eggs are revolving in each minute part of the Divine Being.⁴ The modern scientists believe in the immense magnitude of the world. Sir James Jeans, for example, says that 'about two millions of such nebulae can be photographed in all, and there are probably millions of millions of others beyond the range of any telescope'.⁵ But that is not all. For as Sir Arthur Edington observes, the world is still expanding. He says, 'I deal with the view now tentatively held that the whole material universe of stars and galaxies of stars is dispersing ; the galaxies scattering apart so as to occupy ever-increasing volume'.⁶

According to the Hindu scriptures, this wonderful universe has three phases—creation, sustenance and sublation. God as creator is Pradyumna ; as preserver He is Aniruddha ; and as destroyer He is Saṅkarṣaṇa. Although the Deity is the repository of countless Divine attributes, yet six of them viz. knowledge, power, prowess, supremacy, energy and splendour are most important. When His knowledge and power predominate over His prowess, supremacy, energy and splendour, He becomes Saṅkarṣaṇa. His colour then is like that of the yellow topaz ; and He wears a blue garb and holds a plough, a pestle and a conch in His three hands, keeping the fourth hand in a position symbolizing protection to the distressed. The emblem in His banner is palmyra. His knowledge serves to uphold the secrets of the scriptures to human beings and His power is responsible for the destruction of the world.⁷

When the Deity's prowess and supremacy come to predominate over His knowledge, power, energy and splendour, He becomes Pradyumna. His colour then is like that of the rays of the sun. He wears a red garment and holds a bow, arrows and conch in His three hands, keeping the fourth hand free to offer fearlessness to His devotees. The crocodile is the emblem in His banner. He propagates righteousness through His prowess and creates the universe by dint of His supremacy.⁸

When energy and splendour predominate in the Deity, He is called Aniruddha. His colour then is blue ; and He puts on a white

dress and wields a sword, a club (khetā), a conch in His three hands, while His fourth hand extends fearlessness to man. The deer is the emblem of His banner. Lord of the individual ego, He propagates knowledge of the Self through His splendour and supports the world through His energy.⁹

Besides the three emanations of the Deity described above, the Deity Himself, in whom all the six attributes are simultaneously manifest, is sometimes recognised as an additional emanation. He is then called Vyūha-Vāsudeva or the Deity-in-Emanations. He is moon-like in colour ; wears a yellow dress and holds a conch, a disc, & a mace in His three hands, vouchsafing absence of fear to the devotees with the fourth. The eagle is the emblem of His banner.¹⁰

The Āgamic literature contains references sometimes to five, sometimes to nine, sometimes to ten and even twelve of them.¹¹ The twelve emanations are Keśava, Nārāyaṇa and Mādhava said to be the emanations of Vāsudeva, being respectively golden, swarthy and sappherine in complexion. Govinda, Viṣṇu and Madhusūdana are the emanations of Saṅkarṣaṇa, resembling the moon, the lotus-filament and the lotus respectively in colour. Trivikrama, Vāmana and Śridhara are the emanations of Pradyumna, respectively possessing the colours of fire, the rising sun and the white lotus. Hṛṣikeśa Padmanābha and Dāmodara are the emanations of Aniruddha, having respectively colours resembling those of lightning, the sun and the indragopa-insect.

Commenting on the Brahma-sūtra 2.2. 42-45, Śaṅkara has referred to the treatment of the Vyūha by the Bhāgavata school and sums it up as follows :—

- (a) Vāsudeva is pure knowledge and He is the only Supreme Reality ;
- (b) While remaining Vāsudeva Himself, He has divided Himself to Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha ;
- (c) Vāsudeva is the Supreme Soul ; Saṅkarṣaṇa is the individual soul ; Pradyumna is mind ; and Aniruddha is the ego ;
- (d) Vāsudeva is the primal cause, while Saṅkarṣaṇa and others are effects ;
- (e) Man attains God, when his distress comes to an end as a result of his worship for a century in the following ways :
1. approaching the temple and the idol ; 2. collecting necessary articles such as flowers ; 3. offering flowers etc to

the idol ; 4 chanting God's names etc. and 5 contemplation on the Divine form.¹²

Śaṅkara does not object to the view that Vāsudeva has divided Himself into various forms, because he thinks that it is in conformity with the scriptures. Nor is he opposed to the programme of worship, because it is, as he says, approved of by the Śruti and Smṛti. But he disapproves of the view that Saṅkarṣaṇa is born of Vāsudeva, Pradyumna of Saṅkarṣaṇa, and Aniruddha of Pradyumna. If an individual soul (Saṅkarṣaṇa), he argues, be regarded as the offspring of God (Vāsudeva), it would become non-eternal. For whatever is born or produced is non-eternal. Similarly, continues Śaṅkara, mind (Pradyumna) cannot be regarded as a product of an individual soul (Saṅkarṣaṇa), because an instrument cannot be produced from an agent. An axe, for instance, cannot be produced from a wood-cutter. Likewise, the emergence of the ego (Aniruddha) from the mind (Pradyumna) is unacceptable to Śaṅkara, because no instance of this sort is to be met with in the world. Moreover, there is no Vedic text, he adds, in support of this view. If so, on the other hand, Śaṅkara continues, the forms of Saṅkarṣaṇa etc. be regarded respectively not as soul, mind and ego, but as different Divine forms, then the doctrine of one God advocated by the Bhāgavatas would not stand. He further criticizes the view of the Bhāgavatas, saying that the Pāñcarātra scripture stands opposed to the Vedas in so far as it states that Śāṇḍilya could not attain peace despite his study of all the four Vedas and that he could attain it only by studying the Pāñcarātra literature.¹³

According to Śaṅkara, then, the question of the origin of the Vyūhas cannot arise, since production pre-supposes non-eternity. But Rāmānuja differs from Śaṅkara in this respect. The manifestation of a vyūha, Rāmānuja observes, is not to be regarded as a case of production in the ordinary sense of the term. He contends that Vāsudeva, the Supreme Brahman, voluntarily assumes four forms in order that the devotees may find refuge in Him.¹⁴ The three forms of Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha rule over souls, mind and ego respectively. In other words, the relation of the former to the latter is that of the ruler and the ruled. But sometimes Saṅkarṣaṇa is identified with the soul, Pradyumna with mind, and Aniruddha with ego.¹⁵ The one 'Supreme Being presents Itself in four forms merely out of compassion for the worshippers ; but God in Himself is one and not many. As regards individual souls, Rāmānuja points out that the Pāñcarātra scripture itself denies that they are subject to birth. The Parama-saṁhitā, for example, clearly states that individual souls are truly without a beginning and without an end.¹⁶

As regards Śaṅkara's charge that the Pāñcarātra is opposed to the Vedas, Rāmānuja opines that it is absolutely baseless. The statement that Śāṇḍilya did not attain peace through the study of the Vedas only serves to bring out the importance of the Pāñcarātra and not to reject the authority of the Vedas. Like Śāṇḍilya, Nārada also could not derive knowledge of the Self from the Vedas, as the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad states. This does not mean that the knowledge that Nārada obtained from Sanatkumāra was superior to that which is yielded by the Vedas. The fact that neither Nārada nor Śāṇḍilya could profit from the study of the Vedas to the same extent as they did from the study of the Bhumavidyā and the Pāñcarātra respectively merely points to the importance of the scriptures instead of challenging the authority of the Vedas. The main point here is that just as the Bhuma-vidyā is intended to make the teachings of the Vedas easily intelligible, so the Pāñcarātra serves merely to bring the teachings of the Vedas within easy reach of the people.¹⁷ The Paramasamhitā informs that Viṣṇu found out the essence of the teachings of the Vedānta (Upaniṣads) and presented the Vedas in an abbreviated form under the title of the Pāñcarātra.¹⁸ Rāmānuja, therefore, concludes that the authority of the Pāñcarātra is unchallengeable.

Although Śaṅkara dismissed the authority of the Pāñcarātra, he did not, it is interesting to note, set aside the doctrine of Vyūha which finds mention in the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas also. In his commentary on the word 'caturvyūha' occurring in Śri-Viṣṇu-sahasranāma, Śaṅkara has quoted a verse from Vyāsa, which reads: 'The well-known Janārdana divides Himself into four forms of Vāsudeva and others, and executes creation etc. (of the universe)'.¹⁹ However, not only Rāmānuja but all Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas after him have admitted the doctrine of the Vyūhas (Deity's emanations) and held that these are the embodiments of the sportive grandeur (līlā-vibhuti) of God.

As regards līlā-vibhuti, it is a general name for the creation, sustenance and destruction, in a fixed order and under Divine law, of the myriads of cosmic eggs spread in all directions in the azure vault. Nobody knows how many worlds are created and destroyed every day in the blue expanse. The Divine sport is indeed mysterious! From the quintuplicated gross elements arises the universe consisting of various worlds, only one of which is this Earth. The eighty-four lakh types of bodies, as tradition goes, are made of compound elements, through which the feelings of pleasure, pain and infatuation are experienced by the individual souls according to their actions. Sattva is the source of pleasure, whose dominance is experienced in vernal breezes, in avenues of trees embraced by cree-

pers, in orchards full of sweet chirping, in the worship of the Deity and other pious rites and in peaceful empires, where life is prosperous, body is healthy and affection is pure. The preponderance of rajas is brought about by hot winds, leafless thorny trees, the drinking of wine, revolutionary states, heavy traffic, lust, anger etc. The predominance of tamas is visible in barren fields, floods, famines, anarchy, poverty, stupor and so on. There is no object, says Rāmānuja, either on this earth or on the celestial region which is devoid of these three attributes of prakṛti.²⁰ The functioning of the triple qualities of matter is, according to the Pāñcarātra view, the vibhuti of Divine sport ; and His three forms respectively associated with the creation, sustenance and sublation of the universe are called Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Saṅkarṣaṇa respectively.

References

1. वासुदेवात्म्यं परं ब्रह्मैवाश्रितवात्सल्यं स्वाश्रित-समाश्रयणीयत्वाय स्वेच्छया चतुर्धार्वितिष्ठते । (श्रीभाष्य २, २, ४१)
2. अनन्त-विचित्र-महाश्चयं-रूपं जगत् । (वेदार्थ-संग्रह पृष्ठ १२६)
3. एकस्मिन्नविद्यापादेनन्तकोटि-ब्रह्मांडानि सावरणानि ज्वलन्ति (त्रिपाद-विभूति-महानारायणोपनिषद् ८)
4. वेदान्तविद्याविगणितांड-परागुचर्या-वाताच्चरोमविवरस्य च ते महित्वम् (भागवतम् १०, १४, ११)
5. The Mysterious Universe by James Jeans : footnote to frontispiece
6. Expanding Universe by Arthur Eddington : preface.
7. सिन्धुर-शिल्पराकार मेकवक्त्रं चतुर्भुजम् ।
अतसी-पुण्य-संकाशवासोभृत् ताल-लांच्छितम् ।
मुख्येन पाणि-युग्मेन तुल्यमाचास्य वै विभो ।
सीरं चक्रं च हस्तेऽस्य मुसलं तु गदा करे । (सात्त्वत-संहिता ५, १२, २४)
8. प्राची-राग-समानेन तेजसा समनन्तरम्
उद्देति दक्षिणाश्यां वै प्रभुः संकरंगात्मना ॥ (सात्त्वत-संहिता, ४, ६)
बल-संवलितेर्नव ज्ञानेनास्तेऽय दक्षिणे । (सात्त्वत-संहिता ५, १४, १६)
9. प्राची-वृण्णिशास-समुदित-खद्योततच्य-दीर्घितिम्
रक्त-कीशेय-वसनं मकरध्वज-शोभितम्
एक-वक्त्रं चतुर्बाहुं तृतीयं परमेश्वरम्
मुख्यं हस्तद्वयं चास्य प्राग्वद् धैर्यं महामते
वामे परस्मिन्द्वयाङ्ग्न्त्रं च दक्षिणे वाणि-पंचकम् । (सात्त्वत संहिता ५, १४, १६)

धर्माशु-रदिम-सन्तप्त-शतधामाधिकेन तु
 रूपेण पदिवमस्यां च व्यवतं प्रद्युम्नसंजया । (सात्त्वत संहिता ४, १०)
 ऐश्वर्येण तु वीर्येण प्रत्यग्भागे प्रतिष्ठितः ॥ (सात्त्वत संहिता ३, ७)

9. (अ) अंजनादि-प्रतीकाशं सुसिताम्बर-वेष्टितम्
 चतुर्भुजं विशालाक्षं मूरगलांधनभूषितम्
 आदिविष्वाणियुगल मात्य मस्यापि कीर्तितम्
 दक्षिणादि क्रमेणाय द्वाम्यां वै खञ्ज खेटकौ ॥ (सात्त्वत संहिता ५, १७, १८)
 (आ) शरदगग्न-संकाश-वर्णेन परमेश्वरः
 समाप्त उत्तरस्यां चाप्यनिरुद्धात्मना ततः ॥ (सात्त्वत संहिता ४, ११)
 (इ) तेजः शक्त्यात्मना सौर्ये संस्थितः परमेश्वरः ॥ (सात्त्वत संहिता ३, ७)

10. (अ) तत्राच्च भगवद्रूपं हिम-कुन्देन्दु-कान्तिमत्
 चतुर्भुजं सौम्य-वक्त्रं पूङ्डरीकनिभेक्षणम्
 पीत-कौशेय-वसनं सुपर्णंध्वज-शोभितम्
 मुख्य-दक्षिण-हस्तेन भीतानामभयप्रदम्
 विद्या-कोशस्तु वामेन संगृहीतश्च शंखराद्
 पृष्ठगे ह्यपरिस्मंश्च प्रोद्यतो दक्षिणे त्वरी
 तथा-विधे गदा वामे निष्पणा वसुधातले ॥ (सात्त्वत संहिता ५, ६, ११)
 (आ) प्राच्यां सितेन वपुषा सूर्य-कान्त्यधिकेन तु
 व्यक्तिमन्येति भगवानु वासुदेवात्मना स्वयम् ॥ (सा० सं० ४, ८)
 (इ) विभजत्यात्मनात्मानं वासुदेवः परः प्रभुः
 अनुजिमत-स्वरूपस्तु प्राग्भागे वद्यगुणात्मना ॥ (सा० सं० ३, ५, ६)

11. (अ) चतुः-पंच-नव-ब्यूह-दश-द्वादश-मूर्तये ॥ (ब्रह्मतन्वान्तर्गत-जितन्ते स्तोत्रम्)
 (आ) सात्त्वतां नव-मूर्तीनामादिमूर्ति रहं परा ॥ (भागवतम् ११, १६, ३२)

12. तत्र भगवता मन्यन्ते भगवानेवैको वासुदेवो निरंजन-ज्ञान-स्वरूपः परमाच्च-तत्त्वम्
 चतुर्धात्मानं प्रविभज्य प्रतिष्ठितो वासुदेवब्यूहरूपेण संकर्षणब्यूहरूपेण प्रद्युम्नव्यूह
 रूपेणानिरुद्धव्यूहरूपेण च । वासुदेवो नाम परमात्मोच्यते । संकर्षणो नाम जीवः ।
 प्रद्युम्नो नाम मनः । अनिरुद्धो नामाहंकारः । तेषां वासुदेवः परा प्रकृतिरितरे
 संकर्षणादयः कार्यम् । तमित्यभूतं परमेश्वरं भगवन्तमभिगमनोपादानेज्या-
 स्वाध्याय-योगैवंवंशतमिष्टवा क्षीण-क्लेशो भगवन्तमेव प्रतिपद्यते इति ।
 (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शंकरभाष्यम् २, २, ४२)

13. वेदप्रतिषेधश्च भवति, चतुर्षु वेदेषु परं शेयोऽलब्ध्वा शांडिल्य इदं शास्त्रमधि-
 गतवानित्यादि वेद-निन्दादर्शनात् । तस्मादसंगतेषां कल्पनेति सिद्धम् ।
 (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शंकरभाष्यम् २, २, ४)

14. अतः संकर्षणादीनामपि परस्पैव ब्रह्मणः स्वेच्छाविप्रहूपत्वादजायमानो बहूधा
 विजायत इति श्रुतिसिद्धस्पैवाऽश्रित-वात्सल्यनिमित्त-स्वेच्छा-विग्रह-संग्रह-रूप
 जन्मनोऽभिधानात्तदभिधायियास्त्र-प्रामाण्यस्याप्रतिषेध इति ।
 (श्रीभाष्यम् २, २, ४१)

15. तत्र जीव-मनोऽहंकार-तत्त्वानामधिष्ठातारः संकर्षण प्रद्युम्नानिरुद्धा इति चंद्रमेव
जीवादिशब्दैरभिधानमविरुद्धम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् २, २, ४१)

16. विप्रतिविद्वा हि जीवोत्पत्तिस्तस्मिन्नपि तत्रे । यथोक्तं परम-संहितायाम्
अचेतना परार्था च नित्या सततविक्रिया
त्रिगुणा कर्मणां क्षेत्रं प्रकृतेऽप्य मुच्यते ।
व्याप्तिं रूपेण सम्बन्धस्तस्यादच पुरुषस्य च
स ह्यनादिरनन्तश्च परमार्थेन निश्चितः ।
इत्येवं सर्वास्वपि संहिताम् जीवस्य नित्यत्ववचनाज्जीव-स्वरूपोत्पत्तिः पंचरात्र-
तत्रे प्रतिविद्वैव । (श्रीभाष्यम् २, २, ४२)

17. तथा वेदार्थस्य दुर्जानितया सुखावबोधार्थः शास्त्रारम्भः परमसंहितायामुच्यते ।
(पूर्वोक्तम्)

18. वेदान्तेषु यथासारं संगृह्ण भगवान्हरिः ।
भक्तानुकम्पया विदान् संचिक्षेप यथासुखम् ॥
(२, २, ४२ ब्रह्मसूत्रोपरि श्रीभाष्योदृतम् ।)

19. व्यूह्यात्मानं चतुर्थी वै वासुदेवादि-मूर्तिभिः
सृष्ट्यादीन्प्रकरोत्येष विशुतात्मा जनार्दनः । इति व्यास-वचनाच्चतुर्ब्यूर्हः ।
(श्री विष्णु-सहस्रनाम शंकर-भाष्ये २८)

20. पूर्विव्यां मनुष्यादिषु दिवि देवेषु वा प्रकृतिं-संसृष्टेषु ब्रह्मादिस्थावरात्मेषु
प्रकृतिं वैरेभिस्त्रिभिर्गुणमुक्तं यत्सत्त्वजातं प्राणिजातं न तदस्ति ।
(गीतायां रामानुज-भाष्यम् १६, ४०)

CHAPTER VIII

THE CULT OF BHAKTI

Part I

Views of Śāṇḍilya, Nārada, Patañjali, Vyāsa, Vācaspati Miśra, Bhoja, Bādarāyaṇa, the Bhāgavata, the Devī-Bhāgavata, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Maddhva, Vallabha and Rūpa—Bhakti in Advaita Vedānta—A phase of consciousness—Classification according to the Bhāgavata—Dāsyā bhakti—Dāsyā traced to the Vedas—Unalloyed devotion—Action and knowledge auxiliaries to devotion—Para-bhakti, para-jñāna and Parama-bhakti—Human effort and grace of God in the attainment of bhakti—The path of love open to all—Various phases—Śaṅkara, Vasiṣṭha and Rāmānuja.

The cult of bhakti or devotion is as ancient as the Rgveda where we find beautiful passages replete with devotional feelings. Bhakti is derived from bhaja (to serve) which appears in Vedic utterances such as 'Mahas te Viṣṇo sumatim bhajāmahe' (Rgveda 1.156.3). Etymologically, the word 'bhakti' means service.

The root 'ās' with the prefix 'upa' was also used side by side with the root 'bhaja' for worship in the time of the Samhitās. We read in the Yajurveda (25.13) 'Yasya viṣva upāsate' i.e. 'whom all people worship'. The word 'upāsana' which literally means 'sitting near', might have been primarily used to signify 'sitting down for worship'. But it came later to mean worship in general. Bhakti and upāsanā are thus synonymous.

When a person becomes intoxicated with God-consciousness, and contemplates nothing but God, always sings His glory and is devoted to worshipping Him, he is indeed in the state of bhakti. In other words, when a person performs physical activities only to please God, and when God alone is the focus of all his mental activities, there arises in him the state of bhakti. Bhakti thus is the centralization of all our physical and mental functions in God. God is the basis and support of all thoughts and all actions of the devotees. He is their father, mother, friend and son ; He is their learning, wealth and so on.¹

Since Divine service starts with love of God, the word 'bhakti' is also taken to mean love. Śāṇḍilya has defined it as deep attach-

ment to God.² Nārada has also defined it as deep love of God,³ and added that it is fully expressed in a state wherein a person dedicates his actions to God and feels extreme anguish in obliviscence of Him.⁴ Patañjali has in his Yoga-sutra called it *prāṇidhāna*.⁵ According to him, it is one of the five practices necessary at the second stage of spiritual discipline.⁶ It is also stated to be one of the various means of mental concentration. He mentions that trance in its completeness is a result of *prāṇidhāna*.⁷

Vyāsa, the well-known commentator on *Yoga-sūtras*, regards 'prāṇidhāna' as a kind of devotion.⁸ While elucidating Vyāsa's ideas, Vācaspati Miśra has added that devotion may be either mental or oral or physical.⁹ At another place, Vyāsa interprets the term as meaning 'dedication of all actions to the Great Teacher i. e. God'.¹⁰ But he perhaps realized the difficulty in dedicating all actions to God. He therefore suggested an alternative interpretation of the term viz 'dedication of the *fruits* of actions to God',¹¹ which is decidedly the better of the two interpretations in view of the teachings of the *Gītā*. Bhoja, like Vyāsa, has interpreted 'prāṇidhāna' as *bhakti-viśeṣa*, which is devotion specially in the form of offering all actions to Him.¹² A comprehensive interpretation of the term 'prāṇidhāna' is given by Vyāsa in his comment on *Yoga-sūtra* 2.45 where he states that *prāṇidhāna* consists in man's offering of all his feelings (*bhāva*) to God.¹³ Accordingly, Patañjali's *prāṇidhāna* may be defined as 'putting one's own mind into God' which should, however, mean the dedication of the feelings of the individual rather than the individual himself to God.

Bādarāyaṇa calls devotion to God *samṛādhana* in the *Brahma-sūtra*.¹⁴ Brahman is usually un-manifest, but it is visible to a devotee or a man in a state of *samṛādhana*.

According to the *Bhāgavata*, *bhakti* consists in the uninterrupted presence of the individual mind in God.¹⁵ The *Devi-Bhāgavata* says that in devotion mind remains in the Deity as steady as the flow of oil.¹⁶

Rāmānuja defines *bhakti* as the contemplation of God, accompanied by love.¹⁷ According to him, Brahman, the object of contemplation, is very lovely and, for that reason, the very act of contemplation is very sweet.¹⁸ Thus for him, *bhakti* is continuous, loving meditation of the beloved; the stream of the loving thought is unbroken like the stream of oil.¹⁹ The *ācārya*, in this connection, records the following extracts from various scriptures :

(a) On knowledge : 'Having known Him alone one crosses beyond mortality'.²⁰

- (b) On contemplation : 'The Ātman is to be contemplated'²¹
- (c) On concentration : 'Concentrating upon Him, he then sees Him',²²
- (d) On worship : 'The all-seeing Ātman alone is to be worshipped',²³
- (e) On remembrance : 'Mind being pure, remembrance is firm',²⁴
- (f) On visualization : 'Ātman is to be visualized'.²⁵

All the above extracts, Rāmānuja says, refer to deep meditation, a state in which the devotee sees God face to face, as it were,—a state closely resembling vision of God in a literal sense. God is infinite bliss par excellence. He being the Supreme Lord, the soul devoted to Him feels excessive joy in devotional approach to Him. Bhakti is thus of the nature of bliss. The enjoyment of things of a nature other than the Divine may, if at all, yield only a minute fraction of bliss, and that too only temporarily. Bliss—permanent and perfect—can be derived only from God.

According to Nimbārka, a particular type of love is bhakti which grows in the heart of man endowed with qualities such as modesty.²⁶ Such Bhakti is of two kinds—bhakti as a means and bhakti as an end in itself.

Mādhwā holds that bhakti is intense devotion proceeding from knowledge of the greatness of God. It is a tie between the devotee and his Deity, and can be established in a threefold way; through body, through speech and through mind. Almsgiving, protecting the distressed and giving shelter to the destitute are the bodily activities proper of a person of devotion. Speaking the truth, speaking the good, speaking the sweet and the recitation of sacred texts constitute devotion through speech. Kindness, faith and desire for service to the Deity are the chief constituents of devotion through mind. These physical, oral and mental activities directed to God together make up devotion in its completeness and perfection.

Vallabha believed in a twofold bhakti—the maryādā-bhakti and the puṣṭi-bhakti. In the case of the former a devotee loves the Lord in conformity with the scriptural injunctions, whereas in that of the latter, love is prompted and promoted by the grace of God Himself. Those who follow the path of puṣṭi-bhakti adore God, because they love Him most zealously. Their love is indeed of the same nature, as that which characterised the famous cow-herdesses of Vṛndāvana.

Rūpa Goswāmī of the Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava School has defined bhakti as intent or assiduous thought fixed on Śri Kṛṣṇa, devoid of any mundane desire, and unmixed with knowledge, action and so on.²⁷ By knowledge he means the contemplation of the non-dual Brahman, and by action he means the obligatory (nitya) and the periodical (naimittika) duties. According to him, devotion has three stages : (a) sādhana or means, (b) bhāva or sentiment, and (c) prema or love.²⁸ The means or the expedient reaches the sentiment, and the sentiment terminates in love which is the highest goal of human life. Expedients are many, and Rūpa Goswāmī has enumerated no less than sixty-four of them. But even one expedient can suffice for the achievement of the highest goal as is shown by the example of Parikṣit. Parikṣit devoutly listened to the account of the glorious deeds of the Deity, which exemplifies 'Śravaṇa'. Ambarīṣa, however, afforded an example of resorting to several expedients. Besides relying on Śravaṇa, he used to recite God's names and worshipped Him and so on.

'Expedient devotion' is again twofold—the vaidhi²⁹ and the rāgānugā.³⁰ The former corresponds to the sāttvika-bhakti of the Bhāgavata and the maryādā-bhakti of the Vallabha school, which is said to be actuated by scriptural injunctions; whereas the latter is analogous to the natural thirst for love in persons like Rādhā and Yaśoda.

As has been said above, all the expedients have their culmination in 'bhāva' which makes the mind infinitely tender.³¹ This state can be attained also through the grace of God. But no matter whether it is attained by human effort or through Divine grace, it may grow still deeper to culminate finally in 'prema'.³² Like 'bhāva', prema also can be attained through Divine grace. Fortunate indeed is he to whom God grants the privilege of attaining to this state.

On the basis of Sanskrit rhetoric Rūpa Goswāmī has treated bhakti as a sentiment (rasa) and distinguished its primary and secondary forms. The former, according to him, has five aspects: Śānta (quiet), prita (affectionate), preyān (more affectionate), vatsala (fond) and madhura (sweet). Each preceding aspect is inferior to the succeeding one. Hence the madhura stands first and the Śānta last, in order of perfection.³³

According to Advaita Vedānta, devotion is contemplation of the Saguṇa or the lower Brahman.³⁴ Its main object is the concentration of mind: the attainment of satya-loka is the secondary object.³⁵ Śankara endorses Bādarāyaṇa's view that those who practise Yoga discover the true nature of the Ātman at the time of samṛāḍhana

consisting in love, contemplation etc.³⁶ Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, in his *bhakti-rasāyana* says, that as a result of various religious observances the mind loses its stiffness and becomes supple or rather melts, and flows like a stream into God, the Lord of all. The state thus attained by mind is *bhakti*.³⁷

Rāmānuja's *bhakti* is, however, a phase of the soul's consciousness. Consciousness is one, but it assumes various forms according to the nature of the channel through which it flows. It functions through the inner and the outer sense-organs in all living beings. The inner sense-organ is mind which is sāttvika, rājasa or tāmasa according as the one or the other of these *guṇas* preponderates. Consciousness occurring in a sāttvika mind differs apparently though not essentially from that which occurs in a rājasa or a tāmasa mind. Consciousness due to tāmas is illusion ; it is lust when it is due to rājas ; in its sāttvika origin it is devotion. Śrinivāsādāsa has given a long list of the different forms of consciousness in its different aspects. According to him, perception, inference, scriptural testimony, recollection, doubt, false knowledge, discrimination, perseverance, infatuation, desire for enjoyment, enmity, pride, jealousy, fortitude, fickleness, deceit, greed, wrath, arrogance, inactivity, opposition, intentness, disgust, pleasure, benevolence, malevolence, love, satisfaction, courage, peace, renunciation, lust, friendship, mercy, desire for salvation, bashfulness, endurance, consideration, desire to win, hatred, contemplation, hypocrisy, finding fault with merits, desire to kill, avidity, hoping against hopes, inclination, worship, faith, devotion, self-consecration etc., are the various aspects of consciousness and so serve to distinguish the different qualities of the soul under various conditions.

It might, of course, be contended that desire, intention, doubt, faith, faithlessness, courage, couragelessness, bashfulness, thought and fear are, as the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*³⁸ observes, only ingredients of mind, so they cannot be said to constitute consciousness. To this Śrinivāsādāsa's reply is that those, really, constitute consciousness but are only figuratively attributed to the mind in view of the fact that there is a relation of co-operation between mind and consciousness.³⁹ He agrees, in this respect, with Rāmānuja as is evident from the opening verse in the *Śrī-bhāṣya* which runs thus : 'May my intellect or understanding be devotional unto Para-Brahman.'⁴⁰

The *Bhāgavata* classifies *bhakti* under four heads ; tāmasa, rājasa, sāttvika and *nirguṇa* with reference to the motives respectively underlying them. The tāmasa or the lowest form of *bhakti* is that which is actuated by violence, hypocrisy or malice. Better than this is the

rājasa bhakti which is practised for the sake of gaining fame, sensual enjoyment or supremacy over others. Sāttvika bhakti is that refined form of love in which the sense of duty is predominant element and which is cultivated for the destruction of the tie of actions, and is offered to God. Nārada has also admitted this classification. The nirguṇa bhakti is the highest kind of devotion. It is unmotivated and is aroused by the realization of the glory of God. It is, in fact, a state in which the individual enters into the life of God or the all-pervading Deity just as the waters of the Ganges enter into the ocean.⁴¹

The Devi-bhagavata, like the Bhāgavata, classifies bhakti with reference to the various motives as determine the preponderance of the different guṇas. Of the various kinds of bhakti the sāttvika is recognised as the highest and is called 'para bhakti'—a state in which the individual mind remains fixed upon the Deity as continuously as a stream of oil. It is thus of the same nature as the nirguṇa-bhakti of the Bhāgavata and is, likewise, unmotivated.⁴²

Rāmānuja liked the *dāsyā* bhakti. Although he has not fully explained the meaning of the term 'dāsyā', it is not improbable that he understood the term in the sense in which it is generally used in devotional literature. The traditional explanation of the nature of *dāsyā* bhakti is the love of a servant towards his master.

Bhakti is service mingled with love. It has thus a sociological basis and has the following well-marked phases :

- (a) the love of a son towards his parents, which is the love of the younger or inferior for the elder or senior ;
- (b) the love of a parent towards the son, which is obviously the love of the senior or superior for the younger or junior.
- (c) the love of a friend towards a friend, which is the love of an equal for an equal.

The love of a student for his teacher or that of a servant for his master is akin to filial love, and is designated as *dāsyā* (literally servanthood) in devotional literature. The love of a teacher for his student and that of a master for his servant is similar to parental love and is termed as *vātsalya* (literally parental affection). The love of a person for his friend is called *sakhya* (literally friendship). The love of a wife for her husband may be either *dāsyā* or *sakhya*. But later Vaiṣṇavism has given it the name of *mādhurya* or spousal love (literally sweetness).

A devotee regards himself as son, and God as father. Although man is not born of God in the same sense as a child is born of a human father, yet God should be looked upon as father and man as son for devotional purposes.⁴³ The use of the words 'son' and 'father' is obviously metaphorical in this connection. A similar metaphorical significance is attached to such relations as 'master and servant', 'teacher and the taught', in terms of which the relation between God and man is understood. Again, when a devotee addresses God as husband,⁴⁴ the use of the word 'husband' is purely figurative; for there can be no marital relation in its ordinary sense between man and God. The spousal love spoken of in Vaiṣṇava literature is entirely asexual and corresponds to the Greek 'agape', and differs from worldly love signified by the Greek word 'eros' or 'erotos'.

Tastes differ. Some devotees wish to worship God with parental affection; some desire to adore Him as a friend; and some choose to invoke Him as a master. But the most proper and easiest form of bhakti is that which involves the meditation of God as father, mother, teacher, master or king. A true devotee cannot but pray, 'O God, since my birth I have been your servant, your disciple, your son; you are my master, teacher, mother and father'.⁴⁵ In praise of Goddess Lakṣmi, the Agni-purāṇa addresses: 'You are the mother of all beings and Hari is the father'.⁴⁶

The religious aspirant may, however, choose any of the several types of devotion. What particular type he should choose would depend upon his feeling. What counts is the intensity of devotion. That is why a devotee's attitude towards God, even when it is like that of a paramour towards his beloved, is also praised. The illicit love of a profligate for his or her lover may perhaps be very intense. Hence the devotee's attitude towards God is sometimes called jarabhāva (i.e. the paramour's attitude). The saint-poet Tulasīdāsa, in the closing verse of the Rāma-carita-mānasa observed: "I wish I could feel that endearment to the name 'Rāma', O God, which a niggard feels towards his self and a lecher does to a woman."⁴⁷

The idea of meditation on God as father together with service of the dāsyā type done to Him is very old. There is profuse reference to it in the Vedas. It is incumbent upon every twice-born person to adore God daily as savitā or the creator at the time of repeating the gāyatri.⁴⁸ The term 'Savitr' means father. The conception of the 'fatherhood' of God is familiar to the Gītā also. Arjuna praised Śrī Kṛṣṇa thus: 'Your glory is unique in all the three worlds. None is equal to you. How can, then, one be your superior? You are the father and the venerable Teacher of the world—moving and

stationary.⁵⁹ This obviously involves the conception of devotion of the *dāsyā* type. According to the *Bhāgavata*, Śiva is the best worshipper of Viṣṇu, and Śiva in his incarnation as Hanumān displayed his attitude as a *dāsa*.⁶⁰ It is exactly in this sense that Rāmānuja understands the nature of bhakti.⁶¹

Viśiṣṭādvaita tells us about two ways of devotion : the way of a young monkey and that of a young cat. In the case of the former, the devotee is as active in devotion to the Deity as is a young monkey in clasping its mother. In the case of the latter he is as passive as a young cat is in mewing to its mother. There is a stress on human effort in the former, and on resignation and Divine grace in the latter. The Vadagalais prefer the way of the monkey, while the Tengalais that of the cat.

Unalloyed Devotion.

Śri Kṛṣṇa has said in the *Gitā* that four different types of people worship him. The first is afflicted, the second is eager for knowledge, the third wants prosperity, and the fourth is of a philosophical temperament.⁶² Nārada has also referred to these four classes of devotees.⁶³ Rāmānuja, however, reduces these four classes into three. He does not distinguish between the first and the third, but holds that both are equal, because both desire mundane pleasure and happiness. They indeed realize their end through the grace of God, but since they do not worship Him for the sake of salvation, they remain confined within the domain of transmigration.⁶⁴ Superior to them is he who wants to know the real nature of *ātman* i.e., the self in its purity. He indeed is the type of people whom God grants salvation from the evils of wordly life. But the best indeed is he who, in the opinion of Rāmānuja, possesses true knowledge, because it is only he who can engage himself in exclusive devotion to the Deity.⁶⁵ Nārada has also advised us to give all for God.⁶⁶ Rāmānuja's devotion to the Deity is devotion for its own sake only. He never desired to have a mundane good in return of his devotion. Prahlāda's devotion to God is of this nature. He prayed to Lord Narasimha for granting him inexhaustible joy in his devotion to God.⁶⁷ In fact, true men of devotion do not care for the fivefold salvation but are anxious to stick to devotion for its own sake.⁶⁸ That is the reason why Sanaka and his brothers, as Nārada informs, regarded devotion as its own reward.⁶⁹

The Two Auxiliaries to Devotion : Karma and Jñāna

Disinterested action purifies mind and helps the development of devotion. Although both knowledge and devotion are necessary

for man's emancipation, yet the path of devotion is very attractive. The devotees, therefore, resort to this path and regard both action and knowledge as auxiliary to devotion. God can be realized through the path of knowledge also. Rāmānuja himself says that those who are well versed in the lore of the 'five fires' (pāticagni-vidyā) which aims at the attainment of the knowledge of the self, realize God so as never to come back.⁶⁰ He also attaches importance to meditation on the soul conceived as free from all imperfections. But he points out that the conception of meditation on the soul as 'imperishable, indefinable, indiscernible, all-entering, indeterminable, stable, immovable and eternal' is not within the easy reason of the ordinary man who generally identifies himself with the body.⁶¹ The devotee cannot, therefore, depend solely on knowledge of the self, but finds it necessary to proceed on the path of bhakti.

Worship can bear fruit, if it is performed with the knowledge of the nature of the worshipper and the worshipped. That God is the worshipped and the soul the worshipper is a truth which every devotee must know. Bhāradvāja Saṃhitā teaches, 'God, the Supreme Soul, is my master. I am His servant. All that I do is His service, and it is an epitome of all knowledge'.⁶² Similarly the Brahma-tantra says, 'O Lord, there is no other means than yourself for my welfare, not only in this life but also in lives to come. I have acquired this knowledge and I wish it might not perish in my future births'.⁶³

Supreme devotion, Rāmānuja says, is the result of knowledge which arises from love. Indeed, it is natural for man to love and to know. Besides para-bhakti, and para-jñāna, Rāmānuja admits parama-bhakti, and places them in the following order:

- (a) Para-bhakti
- (b) Para-jñāna, and
- (c) Parama-bhakti.⁶⁴

Para-bhakti, i.e., primary love of God in the heart of a man makes him inquisitive about Godhead. But perfect knowledge acquired by him about God (Para-jñāna) culminates in the supreme devotion which the ācārya designates as 'parama-bhakti'. Rāmānuja expresses this order in his Gadya-traya. Śrinivāsadasa agrees on this point.⁶⁵ In his comments on the Gīta (18.55) Rāmānuja also says that a devotee attains to God directly by devotion which, boundless and supreme as it is, arises from the knowledge of the nature, attributes and glory of God. Bhakti in its supreme form is characterised by Rāmānuja as the realization, or rather the most clear, most dear and unceasing perception of God. Such devotion arises in a person whose heart has been

cleaned by the practice of *jñāna*-yoga and *karma*-yoga. Rāmānuja tells us that this view is based on the teachings of Yamunācārya, his predecessor.⁶⁶

Human Effort and Divine Grace in the Practice of Devotion

As has already been said, *bhakti* belongs to the consciousness of the individual soul. This, as Rāmānuja points out, means that *bhakti* is a matter of human effort.⁶⁷ Man is to love and to pray. Prayer to God is but an effort on man's part. A man is to engage himself in devotion to God, and he is to dedicate himself to Him. But men of devotion can perhaps be never confident that they love God to their utmost capacity. The greatness of God inspires awe in man with the result that he feels too humble to aspire after Divine love. Man therefore prays to God to give him the necessary power to know and love Him. Rāmānuja himself prayed to God for a grant of the knowledge of, and devotion to, Him.⁶⁸ In fact, many devotees hold that supreme devotion is attainable also through the grace of God. In this respect Vallabha and Rupa Goswamī are in agreement with Rāmānuja. Śrinivāsādāsa also holds that *bhakti* is twofold : *sādhana-bhakti* and *phala-bhakti*, the former being a result of human effort and the latter of Divine grace.⁶⁹

Universality of Bhakti

According to Rāmānuja, God protects all irrespective of their differences. He is the refuge of all beings, high and low, irrespective of their differences of caste (*jāti*), contour (*akāra*), creed (*jñāna*) and character (*svabhāva*).⁷⁰ A man who is exclusively devoted to God is to be honoured as a prominent Vaiṣṇava even if he has transgressed the rules of conduct to be observed in his caste. The path of devotion is open to all. Women, traders, menials and even the sin-born attain the supreme state by taking refuge in Him. The Bhāgavata says : 'Hail to that omnipotent Lord by depending upon whose devotees, the low-born people—the kirātas etc.—and other sinners become pure'.⁷¹ The later apostles of *bhakti* are similarly liberal in their view. They preach that everybody is entitled to enter into the relation of *bhakti* with God.⁷² The Gītā says, 'Even if a person of the most wicked ways exclusively worships God, he is to be regarded as a saint, for he has resolved rightly'.⁷³ One might ask : 'How can a person of vile conduct be regarded as righteous and virtuous?' 'One who has not ceased from wickedness cannot attain God even though he may possess knowledge', says the Kaṭha Upaniṣad.⁷⁴ To this Rāmānuja replies that worship of God destroys the sins of the vicious person and that such a person goes to an

eternal state from which there is no return.⁷⁵ Rāmanuja bases this view on the Scriptures. 'Recital of God's names', says the Viṣṇupurāṇa, 'destroys all sins just as fire removes all impurities of metals'.⁷⁶

The Vedas contain stray references to about seven phases of devotion as expressed in the following extracts :

1. One should try to have Him through *hearing*.⁷⁷
2. Firm are His people who *recite*.⁷⁸
3. (a) We all *praise* the deeds of the Lord.⁷⁹
(b) May my *praise* strengthen you.⁸⁰
(c) I, a feeble man, *praise* you, the powerful.⁸¹
4. May my *forceful recollection* reach Viṣṇu.⁸²
5. *Pay your offerings* to Viṣṇu, the valiant and adorable.⁸³
6. (a) *Salutations* to the light pertaining to Brahman.⁸⁴
(b) *I bow down* to Devī Mādhavī, the Spouse of Viṣṇu.⁸⁵
7. We *meditate* upon the adorable lustre of the Deity.⁸⁶

In the principal Upaniṣads one may distinguish five such phases :

1. Atman is to be *seen*,
2. *heard* about,
3. *pondered over*, and
4. *meditated upon*.³⁷
5. We proclaim manifold *salutation* to Thee.⁸⁸

The Bhāgavata mentions nine⁸⁹ and Nārada-Bhakti-sūtrā eleven⁹⁰ phases of devotion. Rāmanuja has also made stray references to about nine such phases though with slight variations.⁹¹

They are :

- (a) Yatana or building of temples and growing of flowers for worship,⁹²
- (b) Śravaṇa or listening to the narration of the Divine attributes etc.,
- (c) Kirtana or recital of the Divine names, hymns etc.
- (d) Arcana or worship of God with fruits, flowers and the like,⁹³
- (e) Stuti or recital of hymns,
- (f) Vacana or discourses on God,
- (g) Vandana or salutation to God,⁹⁴
- (h) Smaraṇa or remembrance of God, and
- (i) Dhyāna or meditation upon God.

Śaṅkara, Vasiṣṭha and Rāmānuja on Bhakti

Śaṅkara allows a place to devotion in the religious life of a man. He himself was a devotee of Viṣṇu as is evident from some of his devotional prayers such as Carpaṭa-pañjarikā⁹⁹ and ṣaṭ-padi¹⁰⁰ and the references to 'Śalagrāma' he has made in his comments on the Brahma-sūtra.⁹⁷ But Yoga-vasiṣṭha philosophy eschews—nay denounces, devotion in rather strong terms : 'Bhakti of or devotion to any particular god is not required, and is not of much use in attaining Liberation.' 'One's own direct realization of the Self through one's own efforts is what is required to experience Liberation, and not devotion to any external god, however strong or powerful he may be.' 'God Viṣṇu, however long propitiated and however pleased, cannot bestow Self-knowledge on one who does not think for himself.'⁹⁸ For Rāmānuja, on the other hand, devotion to God is a sure means of attaining the ultimate good. Bhakti, according to him, results in God-realization. It might, of course, be pointed out that service (bhakti) has somewhere in the smṛti been coudemningly characterised as a canine attitude.⁹⁹ How can, then, service to God be an ideal ? Rāmānuja's reply is this. The kind of service which is condemned by Smṛti is the service done by wordly people for wordly purposes. But God is the best Person worthy of service by people of all kinds.¹⁰⁰ The Gītā reveals : 'He who serves God with unflinching devotion overcomes or crosses over the guṇas of prakṛti and attains to the state of perfection.'¹⁰¹ This devotional service, Rāmānuja says, is the Lore of Brahman (Brahma-Vidyā).¹⁰²

References

1. (अ) वासुदेवः सर्वम् (गीता ७, १६)
 (आ) वासुदेव एव मम परम-प्राप्यं प्रापकं चान्यदपि यन्मनोरथवर्त्ति स एव
 मम तत्सर्वम् । वासुदेवः सर्वमित्यस्यायमेवार्थः (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ७, १६)
- (इ) कदाहं भगवन्तं नारायणं मम कुलनाथं मम कुलदैवतं मम कुलधनं मम
 भोग्यं मम मातरं मम पितरं मम सर्वं साक्षात्करवाणि चक्षुपा (वैकुण्ठगायम्)
- (ई) त्वमेव सर्वं मम देवदेव (पाण्डवगीता, २८)
- (उ) पिता माता सुहृद् वन्धुभ्राता पुत्रस्त्वमेव मे ।
 विद्या धनं च कामश्च नान्यत् किञ्चित्स्वया विना ॥
(ब्रह्मातन्त्रान्तर्गतं जितन्ते स्तोत्रम् १, ७)

2. सा परानुरक्तिरीश्वरे (शाण्डिल्य-सूत्रम्)
 3. सा त्वस्मिन्परमप्रेमरूपा (नारदभक्तिसूत्रम् २)
 4. नारदस्तु तदर्पिताखिलाचारता तद्विस्मरणे परमव्याकुलता (नारदभक्तिसूत्रम् १६)
 5. ईश्वर-प्रणिधानादा (योगसूत्रम् १, २४)
 6. शौब-सन्तोष-तपः-स्वाध्यायेश्वर-प्रणिधानानि नियमाः (योगसूत्रम् २, ३२)
 7. समाधिसिद्धीश्वरप्रणिधानात् (योगसूत्रम् २, ४५)
 8. प्रणिधानाद् भक्तिविशेषात् (योगसूत्रे व्यासमाध्यम् १, २३)
 9. प्रणिधानाद् भक्तिविशेषान्मानसादाचिकात्कार्यिकादा (योगसूत्रोपरि व्यासभाष्ये वाचस्पतिमिश्रकृत-व्याख्या)
 10. ईश्वर-प्रणिधानं सर्वक्रियाणां परमगुरावर्पणम् (योगसूत्रे व्यासभाष्यम् २, १)
 11. तत्फल-संन्यासो वा (योगसूत्रे व्यासभाष्यम् २, १)
 12. प्रणिधानं भक्तिविशेषः, विशिष्टमुपासनम्, सर्वक्रियाणां तत्रापर्णम् (योगसूत्रे भोजबृत्तिः १, २४)
 13. ईश्वरार्पित-सर्वभावस्य समाधिसिद्धिः
 14. अपि संराधने प्रत्यक्षानुमानान्भ्याम् (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ३, २, २४)
 15. मयि सर्वगुहाशये
 मनोगति रविच्छिन्ना (भागवतम् ३, २६)
 16. कल्पाणि गुणरत्नानामाकरायां मयि स्थिरम्।
 चेतसो वत्तनं चैव तैलधारासमं सदा ॥ (शब्दार्थचिन्तामण्डावुद्गता देवीभागवत-सप्तमस्कन्धान्तगंत-देवीगीता)
 17. स्मर्यमाण-विवर्यस्यात्यर्थप्रियत्वेन स्वयमव्यत्यर्थप्रियरूपं स्मृतिसन्तानमेवोपासन-शब्दवाच्यमिति हि निश्चीयते तदेव स्नेह-पूर्वमनुध्यानं भक्तिरित्युच्यते बुधैरिति वचनात् (गीतार्थां रामानुजभाष्यम् ७, १,)
 18. परमपुरुषः स्वैर्नैव स्वयमनवधिकातिशय-मुख्यस्सनु परस्यापि सुखं भवति । ब्रह्म यस्य ज्ञानविषयो भवति स सुखी भवतीत्यर्थः । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् ६१)
 19. मयि तैलधारावदविच्छेदेन निविष्टमना भव (गीताभाष्ये रामानुजभाष्यम् ६, ३४)
 20. तमेव विदित्वाति मृत्युमेति (श्वेताश्वतर ३, ८)
 21. आत्मा वाऽरे निदिव्यासितव्यः (बृहदारण्यक २, ४, ५)
 22. ततस्तुतं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः (कठोपनिषद् ३, १, ८)
 23. आत्मानमेव लोकमुपासीत (बृहदारण्यक २, ४, ५)
 24. सत्त्वशुद्धो ध्रुवा स्मृतिः (छान्दोग्य ७, २६, २)
 25. आत्मा वाऽरे द्रष्टव्यः (बृहदारण्यक २, ४, ५)
 26. कृपाऽस्य दैन्यादियुजि प्रजायते यया भवेत्प्रेम-विशेष-लक्षणा भक्तिहर्त्तनन्याधिपतेर्महात्मनः सा चोत्तमा साधन-रूपिकाऽपरा ॥ (दशश्लोकी २६)

27. अन्याभिलाषिता-जून्यं ज्ञानकर्माद्यनावृतम्
आनुकूल्येन कृष्णानुशीलनं भवितरूपतमा ॥
(भक्तिरसामृतसिन्धुः १, १, ११)

28. सा भवितः साधनं भावः प्रेमा चेति त्रिवोदिता
(पूर्वोक्तम् १, २, १)

29. वैधी रागानुगा चेति सा द्विधा साधनाभिधा
शासनेनैव शास्त्रस्य सा वैधी भवितरूप्यते
(पूर्वोक्तम् १, २, ३)
(पूर्वोक्तम् १, २, ४)

30. विराजन्ती मभिव्यवतं द्रजवासि जनादिपु
रागात्मिका मनुसूता या सा रागानुगोच्यते (पूर्वोक्तम् १, २, ६१)

31. रुचिभिदिवतमासुण्ण-कृदसौ भाव उच्यते ।
(पूर्वोक्तम् १, ३, १)

32. भावः स एव सान्द्रात्मा बृथैः प्रेमा निगद्यते
(पूर्वोक्तम् १, ४, १)

33. (अ) भवेद्भक्तिरसोयेष मुख्यगौणतया द्विधा
पंचधापि रतेरंक्यात् मुख्यस्त्वेकं इहोदितः
सातधात्र तथा गौणं इति भक्तिरसोदृधा
मुख्यस्तु पंचधा शान्तः प्रीतः प्रेयांश्च वत्सलः
मधुरश्चेत्यमी ज्ञेया यथापूर्वं मनुष्टमा: (पूर्वोक्तम् २, ५, ६५, ६७)
(आ) मुख्यो भक्तिरसः पंचविधः शान्तादीरीयंते (पूर्वोक्तम् ३, १, २)

34. उपासनानि सगुणब्रह्मविद्य-मानसव्यापार-रूपाणि (सदानन्दकृत वेदान्तसारः)

35. उपासनानां त्ववान्तरफलं सत्यलोकप्राप्तिविद्या देवलोक इत्यादि श्रुतेः
(वेदान्तसारः)

36. अपि चैनमात्मानं निरस्तसमस्त-प्रपञ्चमव्यवतं संराधनकाले पश्यन्ति योगिनः ।
संराधनं भक्तिध्यान-प्रणिधानाद्यनुष्ठानम् (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् ३, २, २४)

37. द्रृतस्य भगवद्मर्दिरा-वाहिकतां गता
सर्वेषो मनसोवृत्तिभंक्तिरित्यमधीयते ॥ (भक्तिरसायनम् १, ३,)

38. कामः संकल्पो विचिकित्सा श्रद्धाश्रद्धा धृतिरधुतिर्होर्धीर्भीरित्येतत्सर्वं मन एव
(ब्रह्मदारण्यक १, ५, ३)

39. ज्ञानस्य मनः-सहकारित्वनियमान्मन एवेत्युपचारादुक्तमिति न विरोधः
(यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७)

40. भवतु मम परस्मिन् शेषुपी भवितरूपा
(श्रीभाष्य-मंगलम्)

41. मदगुणश्रुतिमात्रेण मयि सर्वंगुहा-शये
मनोगति रविचिद्धन्ना यथा गंगाभ्यसोम्बुधौ
लक्षणं भक्तियोगस्य निगुणस्य हयुदाहृतम् (भागवतम् ३, २६, १२)

42. हेतुस्तु तत्र को वापि न कदाचिद्भवेदपि
(देवीगीता)

43. त्वं हि नः पिता वसो त्वं माता शतक्रतो बभूविय
(ऋग्वेद १८, ११)

44. (अ) पत्यादि शब्देभ्यः
(आ) मेरे पिया मेरे घट में बसत हैं ना कर्ह आति न जाति
(मीरा)

45. जन्मप्रभूति दासोस्मि शिष्योस्मि तनयोस्मि ते ।
त्वं च स्वामी गुरुर्मत्ता पिता च मम माधव ॥
(ब्रह्मतन्त्रान्तर्गत-जितन्ते स्तोत्रम् ३, १२)

46. त्वमस्वा सर्वभूतानान्देवदेवो हरिः पिता ।
कामिहि नारि पियारि जिमि लोभिहि प्रिय जिमि दाम ।
तिमि रघुनाथ निरन्तर प्रिय लागहु मोहि राम ॥
(रामचरितमानस)

48. ऋग्वेद ३,६२,१०.
सामवेद १४,६२.
शुक्लयजुवेद ३, ३५.
तैत्तिरीयसंहिता १,५,६,४.

49. पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य त्वमस्य पूर्णश्च गुरुर्मीरोयात् ।
न त्वस्मोस्त्यम्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो लोकत्रयेष्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥ (गीता ११, ४३)

50. दासोऽहं कोसलेन्द्रस्य रामस्याक्लिष्ट-कर्मणः (रामायणम् ५, ४३, ६)

51. (अ) सततं मां नित्ययुक्ता नित्ययोगमाकांक्षमाणा आत्मवन्तो मद्वास्य-व्यव-
साधिन उपासते (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ६, १४)
(आ) दैवीं गुणमयीं मायां दासभूतं शरणागतोस्मि तवास्मि दास इति वतारं
मां तारय (शरणागतिगच्छम्)
(इ) नित्यकिंकरो भवानि (पूर्वोक्तम्)
(ई) मद्वास्यैकप्रियः...नित्यकिंकरो भव (पूर्वोक्तम्)
(उ) नित्यकिंकरो भविष्यसि (पूर्वोक्तम्)
(ऊ) अन्त्यकाले स्मृतिर्या तु तव कैक्यंकारिता ।
तामेनां भगवन्नन्द क्रियमाणां कुरुष्व मे ॥ (पूर्वोक्तम्)
(ए) नित्यकिंकरो भवानि (श्रीरंगगच्छम्)
(ऐ) नित्यकैक्यरूप-नित्यदास्यं दास्यतीति महाविश्वासपूर्वकं भगवन्तं नित्य-
किंकरतां प्रार्थये (श्रीरंगगच्छम्)
(ओ) तवानुभूति-सम्भूत-प्रीति-कारित-दासताम् ।
देहि मे कृपया नाथ न जाने गतिमन्यथा ॥ (पूर्वोक्तम्)
(ओ) परिचर्यक-मनोरथः (वैकुण्ठगच्छम्)
(अं) भगवतो नित्यस्वाम्यमात्मनो नित्यदास्यं च यथावस्थितमनुसंधाय
(पूर्वोक्तम्)
(अः) भगवत्पादाम्बुजद्वयपरिचर्याशया (पूर्वोक्तम्)
(क) प्रबुद्ध-नित्य-नियाम्य-नित्यदास्यैक-रसात्मकस्वभावः (पूर्वोक्तम्)
(ख) कदाहं भगवत्पादाम्बुजद्वय-परिचर्याकरणयोऽप्यस्तदेकमोगस्तत्पादौ परि-
चरिष्यामि (पूर्वोक्तम्)
(ग) भगवत्परिचर्यायामाशां वद्यं यित्वा (पूर्वोक्तम्)
(घ) मामेकान्तिकात्यन्तिक-परिचर्याकरणाय परिगृह्णीय (पूर्वोक्तम्)

52. चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनाऽजुन ।
 आत्मो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थो ज्ञानी च भरतर्थम् ॥ (गीता ७, १६)

53. गौणी त्रिधा गुणभेदादातर्त्तिद्भेदाद्वा (नारदभक्तिसूत्रम्)

54. ऐश्वर्यंगति प्राप्तानां प्राप्यस्थान-विनाशाद्विना शित्वमवर्जनीयम्
 (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ८, १६)

55. (अ) तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिविशिष्यते ।
 प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽप्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः । (गीता ७, १७)
 (आ) ज्ञानिनामहं यथा प्रियस्तथा मया सर्वज्ञेन सर्वशक्तिनापि अभिधातुं न
 शक्यः (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ७, १७)

56. (अ) तस्मिन्ननन्वयता तद्विरोधीपूदासीनता (नारदभक्तिसूत्रम् ६)
 (आ) अन्याश्रयाणां त्यागोऽनन्वयता (पूर्वोक्तम् १०)

57. या प्रीतिरविवेकानां विषयेष्वनपायिनी ।
 त्वामनुस्मरतः सा मे हृदयान्माऽप्यसर्पतु ॥ (विष्णुपुराणम् १, २०, १६)

58. (अ) धर्मर्थ-काममोक्षेणु नेच्छा मम कदाचन ।
 त्वत्पादपंकजं साधोर्जीवितं दीयतां मम ॥ (ब्रह्मतन्त्रेजितन्तेस्तोत्रम् १, १६)
 (आ) मोक्षं सालोक्य-सारूप्यं प्राथये न धराधर ।
 इच्छामि हि महाभाग कारुण्यं तव सुव्रत ॥ (पूर्वोक्तम् १, ३५)
 (इ) सालोक्य-सार्थि-सामीप्य-सारूप्यकत्वमप्युत ।
 दीयमानं न गृह्णन्ति विना मत्सेवनं जनाः ॥ (भागवतम् ३, २६, १३)

59. स्वयं फलरूपतेति ब्रह्मकुमाराः (नारदभक्तिसूत्रम् ३०)

60. पंचाग्निविदोऽप्यचिरादिना गतिश्वरणात्, अचिरादिना गतस्य ब्रह्म-प्राप्यपुनरावृत्ति-श्रवणान्व ।

61. अव्यक्तविषया मनोवृत्तिदेहविद्वद्देहात्माभिमानयुक्तं देहवन्तो विषयते, देहवन्तो हि देहमेवात्मानं मन्यन्ते (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १२, ५)

62. परमात्मा हरिः स्वामी स्वतोऽहं तस्य किकरः ।
 कैकेयमस्तिलावृत्तिरित्येष ज्ञान-संग्रहः (भारद्वाज-संहिता, पृष्ठ १२२)

63. विज्ञानं यदिदं प्राप्तं यदिदं ज्ञानमजितम् ।
 जन्मान्तरेऽपि देवेश मा भूदस्य परिक्षयः (ब्रह्मतन्त्रान्तर्गतजितन्ते स्तोत्रम् ४)

64. (अ) परभक्ति-परज्ञान-परमभक्ति-युक्तं मां कुरुत्व ।
 (आ) परभक्ति-परज्ञान-परमभक्त्यैक-स्वभावं मां कुरुत्व ।
 (इ) परभक्ति-परज्ञान-परमभक्तिविघ्नप्रतिहतोऽपि ।
 (ई) मदीयैव दयया निशेष-विनष्ट-सहेतुक-मच्चरणारविन्द-युगलंकान्तिकात्यन्तिक-परभक्ति-परज्ञान-परमभक्ति-विघ्नः ।
 (उ) मत्प्रसादलब्ध-मच्चरणारविन्द- युगलंकान्तिकात्यन्तिक - परभक्ति-परज्ञान-परमभक्तिः (शरणागतिगच्छम्)

65. भक्तिः परभक्ति-परज्ञान-परमभक्तिरूप-क्रमवती । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७)

66. (अ) तदुक्तं परमगुरुभिर्यामुनाचार्यपादैरभयकम्मितस्वान्तस्यैकान्तिकभक्तियोगलभ्य इति, ज्ञानयोग-कर्मयोग-संस्कृतान्तःकरणस्येत्यर्थः ।
(वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १४६)

(आ) ज्ञानकर्मनुशृहीतं भक्तियोगमवतारयामास
(गीतार्थां रामानुजभाष्यम्-उपोद्घातः)

67. (अ) एवमहरहरनुष्ठीयमान-वर्णात्रमधमनुशृहीत-तदुपासनरूप-तत्समाराधनप्रीतः
(श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ४, २२)

(आ) मां सत्यसंकल्पं परमकार्हस्तिकमात्रितवात्सल्यजलधिमव्यभिचारेणीकान्त्यविशिष्टेन भक्तियोगेन च यः सेवते
(गीतार्थां रामानुजभाष्यम् १४, २६)

68. (अ) "तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एक-भक्तिविशिष्यते ।" (गीता ७-१७)
"उदाराः सर्वं एवंते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।" (गीता ७-१८)
"बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपदते ।" (गीता ७-१९)
इति श्लोकत्रयोदितज्ञानिनं मां कुरुत्व । (शरणागतिगच्छम्)

(आ) "पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।" (गीता ८-२२)
"भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्यः" (गीता ११-५४)
"मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम्" (गीता १८-५४)
इति स्थानत्रयोदित-परमभक्तियुक्तं मां कुरुत्व (शरणागतिगच्छम्)

69. सा द्विविधा साधनभक्तिं-फलभक्तिभेदात् । उक्तसाधनजन्या साधनभक्तिः फलभक्तिस्त्वीश्वरकृपाजन्या । (यतीन्द्रमतदीदिका ७)

70. (अ) जातितश्चाकारतः स्वभावतो ज्ञानतश्चात्यन्तोत्कृष्टापकृष्टव्येण वर्तमानेषु सर्वेषु भूतेषु समाथ्ययणीयत्वेन समोऽहम् । (गीतार्थां रामानुजभाष्यम् ६, २६)

(आ) अनालोचित-विशेषाशेष-लोकशरण्य (पूर्वोक्तम् ६, ३४)

(इ) विविध-विनतभूत-क्रातरक्षैकदीक्षे (श्रीभाष्यमंगलम्)

71. किरात-हूणान्दा-पुलिन्दपूलकसा आभीरकंका यवनाः खसादयः ।
येन्ये च पापा यदुपाश्रयाश्रयाः शुद्धर्नित तस्मै प्रभविष्यते नमः ॥
(भागवतम् २, ४, १८)

72. शास्त्रतः शूयते भक्तौ नृमात्रस्याधिकारिता । (भक्तिरसामृतसिन्धुः १, २, १६)

73. अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक्
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग् व्यवसितो हि सः ॥ (गीता ६, ३०)

74. नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।
नाशान्त-मानसो वपि प्रज्ञानेनैन माप्नुयात् ॥ (कठोपनिषद् १, २, २४)

75. मदभजनेन विधूतपापतयैव समूलोन्मूलित-रजस्तमोगुणः क्षिप्रं धर्मतिमा भवति....
शाश्वतीमपुनरावर्त्तिनीं मत्प्राप्ति-विरोध्याचारनिवृत्तिं गच्छति ।
(गीतार्थां रामानुजभाष्यम् ६, ३१)

76. यन्नाम-कीर्तनं भक्त्या विलापनमनुत्तमम् ।
मैत्रेयाऽशेषपापानां धातूनामिव पावकः ॥ (विष्णुपुराणम् ६, ८, २०)

77. सेदु श्वोभियुज्यं चिदभ्यसत् । (ऋग्वेदः १, १५६, २)

78. ध्रुवासो ग्रस्य कीरयो जनासः । (ऋग्वेदः ७, १००, ४)

79. तत्तदिदस्य पौस्न्यं गुणीमसीनस्य त्रातुरवृक्षस्य मीदुषः । (ऋग्वेदः १, १५५, ४)

80. वर्धन्तु त्वा सुष्टुतयो गिरो मे । (ऋग्वेदः ७, ६६, ७)

81. तं त्वा गुणामि तवसमतव्यान् । (ऋग्वेदः ७, १००, ५)

82. प्र विष्णुवे शूष्मेतु मन्म । (ऋग्वेदः १, १५४, १)

83. महे शूराय विष्णुवे चार्चत । (ऋग्वेदः १, १७५, १)

84. नमो रुचाय त्राहूये । (यजुर्वेदः ३१, २०)

85. नमाम्यच्युत-वल्लभाम् । (श्रीसूक्तम् २५)

86. भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि । (ऋग्वेदः ३, ६२, १०)

87. आत्मा वारे द्रष्टुव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिष्यासितव्यः (बृहदारण्यक ४, ५, ६)

88. भूयिष्ठां ते नम उक्ति विषेम (ईशोपनिषद् १८)

89. अवरण कीर्तनं विष्णुः स्मरणं पादसेवनम् ।
अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सल्पमातमनिवेदनम् ॥ (भागवतम् ७, ५, २३)

90. गुणमाहात्म्यासक्ति-रूपासक्ति-पूजासक्ति-स्मरणासक्ति-दास्यासक्ति-सर्वासक्ति-कात्मासक्ति-वात्सल्यासक्त्यात्मनिवेदनासक्ति-तन्मयतासक्ति-परमविरहासक्तिरूपा एकधार्येकादशश्वा भवति (नारदभक्तिसूत्रम् ८२)

91. अनवरत-स्तुति-स्तुति-नमस्तुति-वन्दन-यतन-कीर्तन-गुणवृष्णु-वचन-ध्यानाचन्न-प्रणामादि— (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १४६)

92. मवन-नन्दनवन-करणादिषु च हृषकेल्या यतमानाः । (गीतायां रामा० ६, १४)

93. मदगुणविशेषवाचीनि मन्नामानि स्मृत्वा पुलकितसर्वाङ्गां हर्षगद्वगदकण्ठाः
श्रीराम-नारायण-कृष्ण-वासुदेवत्येवमादीनि सततं कीर्तयन्तः । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ४, १४)

94. भक्तिभारावनमित-मनोवृद्धयभिमान-पदद्वय-करद्वय-शिरोभिरष्टांगेरचिन्तित-पांसुकद्वय-शक्तरादिके धरातले दण्डवत् प्रणिपतन्तः (पूर्वोक्तम् ६, १४)

95. भज गोविन्दं भज गोविन्दं गोविन्दं भज मूढमते (चर्पटपंजरिका)

96. अविनयमपनय विष्णु दमय मनः शमय विषयमृगतृष्णाम् (षट्पदी)

97. (अ) यथा शालग्रामे हरिः (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् १, २, ७)
(आ) शालग्राम इव विष्णुः (पूर्वोक्तम् १, २, १३)

98. *Yogavāsiṣṭha and its Philosophy by Dr. B. L. Atreya, 1939, pages 88-89.*

99. सेवा इववृत्तिर्व्याख्याता

100. स ह्यात्रमैस्सदोपास्यस्समस्तैरेक एव च } Quoted by Rāmānuja in
Vedārtha-saṅgraha, page 266

101. मां च योव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।
स गुणानु समतीत्येतानु ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ (गीता १६, २६)

102. इयमेव भक्तिरूपा सेवा ब्रह्मविद्या (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् २६५)

THE CULT OF BHAKTI

Part II

Seven means to the development of devotion—Initiation to the devotional career—The five-time worship—A note on image-worship.

All the means to be adopted by a religious aspirant aim at the purity of mind, for only those whose mind is pure are capable of incessant meditation of God. Rāmānuja recommends the following seven means to a man of devotion.¹

The first is the discrimination (viveka) of food. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad says, 'As a man eats, so becomes his mind.' The Gita too insists on the propriety of food in the case of those who practise yoga. The criterion of the purity of food is threefold : (1) Certain articles of food such as onion and garlic are held to be impure by nature. (2) In some cases it is the ownership that pollutes food. For instance, food offered by a prostitute or a eunuch is not worth eating. (3) Food may sometimes be polluted accidentally. If it is eaten by animals such as crows and dogs or seen by vicious people, it ceases to be food proper for men of devotion and those who are desirous of acquiring purity of mind.²

The second means is the giving up of desires for sensual enjoyment (vimoka). Lust, wrath, greed, infatuation, vanity and jealousy are detrimental to spiritual advancement. The Gitā calls first three the three gates to hell.³ Lust overpowers the intellect of man.⁴ Left to itself, it simply increases as fire does with oblations of butter. The sex instinct is indeed a part of human nature. Its satisfaction is necessary but only within limits. It is not possible to find out what Rāmānuja's advice is with regard to sex instinct. But it is clear enough from his writings that he would advise the man of devotion to rise above the urges of the sex instinct.⁵ The Bhāgavata says that the religious aspirant should avoid the company of women and also of those who mix with them.⁶ The Gitā recommends the gratification of the sex instinct only in accordance with the injunctions laid down in moral codes.⁷ From the extract which Rāmānuja quotes from the scriptures, it appears that he understands

the word 'kāma' in the sense of coition and hence he recommends strict celibacy to those who desire salvation.⁸

It is not in the case of male devotees only that the scriptures recommend celibacy and continence. The Bhāgavata says that a female devotee should regard her husband as an illusory appearance created by God.⁹ For the satisfaction of the sex instinct is detrimental to her devotion to God. All family ties, ties with the husband and children etc., keep her fettered to the empirical world. Hence any woman who cares for spiritual advancement should cut them off.¹⁰ A life devoid of all family ties is, of course, proper only for those women who have adopted the way of 'nivṛtti'. But one who prefers to lead the life of 'pravṛtti' should remain with her husband and look upon him as a god.

The third means is the practice of the concentration of mind on God (abhyāsa). There must be something for the mind to fix upon; and God is the fittest object to which all mental activities should be directed.¹¹

The fourth means is the performance (kriyā) of certain actions e.g., the five daily sacrifices which are:—

- (a) the study of religious books,
- (b) offering oblations to the gods,
- (c) offering oblation to the manes with water,
- (d) setting apart a portion of the meals for the cow, the crow, the dog and other animals, and
- (e) hospitality to guests.¹²

The importance of such duties is admitted by the Brahmasūtra¹³ and the Gītā,¹⁴ and the Brahmatantra insists on the daily performance of them by every devotee.¹⁵

The fifth means called Kalyāṇa consists in the cultivation of such virtues as compassion, straight-forwardness, equanimity, non-injury, forgiveness, purity, veracity, serenity, modesty, fortitude and cleanliness. A list of twenty-six such virtues headed by fearlessness is given in the beginning of the sixteenth chapter of the Gītā under the heading of 'daivi sampat'.¹⁶

The sixth means is non-dejection (anavasāda). Pleasure and pain indeed visit every man alternately. But a man of devotional character should not lose heart, if adversity brings him affliction and disaster. The Gītā says that a saint is he whose mind rests undisturbed, while he is overtaken by misfortune.¹⁷

The seventh and the last means is absence of elation (anud-dharṣa). Occasions for joy indeed arise in every man's life. But a man of devotion should remain unperturbed in the midst of merry-making and pastimes. When a person advances more and more in spiritual realization, even gods approach him with alluring offers. But a true man of character is he who is not carried away by such offers.¹⁸

In the chapter on Rāmānuja in his Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha, Mādhava¹⁹ has given an account of the abovementioned means which Rāmānuja and his followers have recommended to a man of devotion. Dr. Radhakrishnan points out that Rāmānuja insists on 'an elaborate preparation, which includes viveka or discrimination of food ; vimoka or freedom from all else and longing for God ; abhyāsa or continuing thinking of God ; kriyā or doing good to others ; kalyāṇa or wishing well to all ; satyam or truthfulness ; ārjava or integrity ; dayā or compassion ; ahimsā or non-violence ; dāna or charity ; and anavasāda or cheerfulness and hope.'²⁰ But in the list of Radhakrishnan there are eleven preparations for bhakti instead of the seven we have mentioned above. Moreover, the order of the preparations in his list is different from the one given in the Yatindra-mata-dīpikā and the Saavadarśana-saṅgraha. Again, 'anud-dharṣa' is missing in Radhakrishnan's list. Satya, ārjava, ahimsā and dāna might be included in Kalyāṇa.

Initiation

The need of initiation to the life of devotion which Vaiṣṇavism has felt very strongly should be conceived in a historical background. The investiture of a young boy with sacred thread was in ancient times regarded so holy that it acquired the significance of his second birth.²¹ Similarly the initiation of a person at a comparatively advanced age to a sacrifice was considered to be his third birth.²² Those who adored Viṣṇu had to undergo initiation at the Pāñcarātra sacrifice.²³ Admission of deserving people to the order of Vaiṣṇavism which was in vogue in the time of Rāmānuja, was perhaps a modified form of the old Vaidika dīkṣā (initiation). The main object of initiation is, indeed, the purification of the individual which should be the pre-condition of his admission to a religious order. A piece of iron covered with dust requires thorough cleaning before it is magnetized. Similarly the finite soul needs purification before it can be God-conscious. According to Pāñcarātra school, the preceptor purifies the disciple and the ceremony of purification comprises the following :—

- (a) The individual should bear on his shoulders the Deity's symbols.
- (b) He should further put special mark on his forehead.
- (c) He should receive a devotional name,
- (d) and mantras,
- (e) and procure an image of the Deity.²⁴

The Five-time Worship

The religious aspirant should devote all his time to the worship of God in the following wise :—

The first item of worship is *abhigamana* or approach to the sacred image of the Deity in a temple or at home. This should be preceded by the performance of the morning duties such as ablution²⁵ and oblation.

The second is *upādāna* or collection and arrangement of the articles needed for worship, e. g., leaves, flowers, fruits and water.

The third is *iijyā* or service which means the adoration of the Deity in five, ten, sixteen, or more formal ways (*upacāra*)²⁶. According to Rāmānuja, service to God consists in offering all kinds of pleasing objects to God.²⁷ Some of these things are externally pleasing, e. g., the waving of lamps and fanning; some are tactually pleasing, e. g., garlanding and smearing with sandal-paste; and some are pleasing through assimilation, e. g., fruits and milk.

The fourth is *svādhyāya* or study which consists in counting the Divine names, chanting the holy hymns or reciting the religious texts.

The fifth is *yoga* or concentration of mind on the Deity.

These five items should be performed in the five divisions of the day. The *Jayākhya Samhitā* has given the details of this worship.²⁸ One who spends his time in worship of this kind is called a *pāñcakalika* i.e. five-time worshipper. However, the first three items are to be performed before midday meals. The *svādhyāya* should be done in the afternoon and the *yoga* during night.²⁹ The taking of meals is a part of the worship, and similarly a six-hour sleep is held to be a part of the *yoga*.³⁰

Venkātanātha informs in his *Pāñcarātrarakṣā* that, according to certain *sambitās*, study and meditation should precede the meals.³¹ The *Bhāradvāja-samhitā* holds that a man is *pāñcarātrika* if he

performs all the five rites in an abbreviated form even once a day.³² Of the five items, *ijyā* is however the most important inasmuch as it includes the remaining four.³³ Worship is not possible unless one approaches an image; so it comprises *abhiprāna*. Again, since there cannot be worship without flowers, fruits etc., the *upādāna* is likewise involved. The uttering of the mantras (*svādhyaya*) is equally essential to worship. Lastly, worship involves mental concentration or *yoga*.

The *Bhāgavata* advises a man to worship the Supreme Person with keen love, no matter whether he is devoid of all desires or he has all desires in him or he is desirous of salvation only.³⁴ Devotion expressed through formal image-worship is a sort of aesthetic approach to God. A nicely decorated niche where the idol is placed conveys to the devotee the architectural beauty of a palace. A green leaf of the holy basil (*tulasi*) is to him the symbol of the grandeur of the world's greenery. A tiny jasemine flower offered by him to the Deity represents the entire flora. The ringing of the little bell at the time of worship is but an humble simplification of instrumental music. Each line in a devotional lay conveys the idea of large-scale vocal music. The waving lamp is only a symbol of the revolving luminary planets. A dot of sandal-paste mixed with camphor, saffron and musk is a sign of most refined luxury. A small grape offered to the Deity is suggestive of the choicest food. A devotee offers all these articles of exquisite beauty to the Most Beautiful.

Image-Worship

Men of devotion who yearned for the holy vision of the adorable Deity naturally wanted to keep His memory ever fresh in their minds. Accordingly, they made images or idols of Him. Sculpture, painting, smithy and clay-modelling,—all came to their help, and yielded them beautiful images of the Most Beautiful.³⁵ The idol of the heart was thus ever present before the eyes. The four-armed image of Viṣṇu had twentyfour variations, each with a definite name. T. A. Gopinath Rao has given a 'table showing the arrangement of the Śāṅkha, cakra, gadā and padma in the four hands of each of the twentyfour Murties of Viṣṇu according to *Rupamandana*.' He has compared the list given in *Rupamandana* with that of the *Padmapurāṇa* and found the former to be 'undoubtedly the correct list, inasmuch as all the twentyfour possible permutations of the four emblems are found to occur in it accurately.'³⁶

Rāmānuja was an iconolator as were the apostles of later Vaiṣṇavism. At Śri-Raṅgam he adored Raṅganātha to whom he addressed his Śri-Raṅga-gadya.³⁷ Raṅganātha is one of the three important images of Viṣṇu in south India, the other two being those of Varadarāja at Conjeevaram and Venkaṭeṣa at Tirupati.

The importance of idol-worship is usually emphasized from two points of view viz. that of the yoga of Patañjali and that of bhakti. Those who practise yoga aim at absolute isolation or kai-valya and follow the rules and regulations enjoined by the sages. The followers of the eightfold path of yoga require, at the sixth and seventh stages (viz dhāraṇī³⁸ and dhyāna³⁹), some devices to concentrate their mind and for this purpose idols are very useful. An idol is kept just in front of the eyes and gazed at for some time after which the eyes are closed but the mind goes on visualizing it. In the beginning, the mind is able to have only vague glimpses, but the view becomes clearer and clearer after prolonged practice. So long as this mental image exists in the mind of a practising yogi, he can not contemplate any object other than the idol. This state is called meditation (dhyāna). The next and the final stage is samādhi where the mental image gradually vanishes and a kind of void takes place.⁴⁰ The state which thus ensues is declared by the yoga-sāstra to be the goal of Yoga, because it is in such a state that the self realizes itself.⁴¹ Paurāṇic literature insists on the importance of idols for the concentration of mind.⁴² The idols recommended for this purpose are those of the principal gods of the Vedic pantheon. The sages preferred the images of gods to those of mundane objects. Although idols are thus held to play an important part in the career of a yogi, the idol-worship which is in vogue in the Hindu temples of India is very different from what it is in the estimation of a yogi. A yogi in the true sense of the term does not pay homage to the idol as such by offering water, sandal-paste etc. For him the idol itself is just an insignificant thing made of earth, stone, wood or metal as the case may be. Nor should he depend, for his yogic practice, upon any particular image. If he cannot, for instance, procure an idol of Viṣṇu, he can carry on his meditation by using whatever idol is available to him. He may use a statue of Napoleon or an image of Mahārāja Pratāpa. Even a beautiful toy can be of immense value to him. In fact, the Yoga-cult only demands that there must be an image in order that the yogic aspirant can have something on which he can concentrate his mind.

But the devotional viewpoint is quite different. The devotee invokes God to come down from His supernatural abode and dwell in the image temporarily or permanently, as the case may be, in order that he can offer oblations to Him. The fervent prayer of the devotee is granted by God and He manifests Himself in His celestial form within the image. The idol, therefore, comes to be regarded as holy on account of its being the dwelling place of the Deity (Arca).⁴³ Although everything in the world is God's body, because it is pervaded with and animated by God, yet the idol is treated as His special manifestation and, in consequence, comes to be adored. The Deity and the holy image are indeed looked upon as identical. But the worshipper offers flowers, fruits and other articles not to the inanimate image but to the indwelling divine being.

Reference to reverence for a stone (image) presided over by the Deity is very old and is to be found in a verse of the Atharva-Veda^{44a}. There seems to be hardly any doubt about the fact that image-worship was in vogue even in the Vedic period. The Rgveda has recorded in 4.24.10 a quarry of Vāmadeva as to who will purchase his Indra for ten cows.^{44b} Such an Indra cannot be anything else than an image of Indra. In both ancient and modern devotional literature mention is made of the idols smiling or speaking. The Sađvīṁśa Brāhmaṇa informs that the images dance and perform similar acts.⁴⁵ Tulasidāsa's Rāmāyaṇa states that Pārvatī, pleased at Sītā's worship, expressed her pleasure with a smile and dropped her garland.⁴⁶ In any case the devotee believes that such images are material bodies of gods and that he can realise his highest good through their worship.

It may be pointed out in conclusion that image-worship in some form or other is prevalent all over the world. Even those who preach against it, adopt it unconsciously. In fact, idolatry is natural to man. Even the avowed iconoclasts show respect to certain symbols. The Muslims kiss the black stone at Kaba, and the Christians hold the cross in high esteem. Hinduism including the Vaiṣṇava cult, which attaches importance to idol-worship in the sense of adoration of the divine spirit dwelling in the idol and not of the idol as such, is, therefore, no exception to the rule.

References

- (अ) मनोमयः परिशुद्धेन मनसैकेन ग्राहो विवेक-विमोक्षादि-साधनसम्पत्कानुगृहीत परमात्मोपासन-निर्मलीकृतेन मनसा गृह्णते । (श्रीभाष्यम् १, २, २)
(आ) उपासनाशास्त्रं चोपनयनादि-मंस्कार-संस्कृताधीत-स्वाध्याय-जनितं ज्ञानं विवेक-विमोक्षादि-साधनानुगृहीतमेव स्वोपायतया स्वीकरोति ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् १, ३, ४०)
- (इ) न ह्यशरीराणां देवादीनां विवेक-विमोक्षादि-साधनसम्पत्कानुगृहीत-ब्रह्मोपासनोपसंहार-सामर्थ्यमस्ति । (श्रीभाष्यम् १, ३, २५)
- (अ) जातिदुष्टं कलंज-गुज्जनादि, आश्रयदुष्टं पतितादि-स्वामिकम्, निर्मितदुष्टमुच्छिष्टादि, (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिकायां प्रकाशटीका, सम्पत्मोक्षतारः) तुलनात्मक वचनानि :—
(आ) अन्नमयं हि सौम्य मनः (ज्ञान्दोग्य ६-६-५)
(इ) आहारशुद्धी सत्त्वशुद्धिः (ज्ञान्दोग्य ७, २६, २)
(ई) युक्ताहार-विहारस्य (गीता ६, १७)
(उ) पलांडु गुज्जनं चैव मत्या जग्धवा पतेद् द्विजः (मनु ५, १६)
(ऊ) लशुनं गुज्जनं चैव जग्धवा चान्द्रायणं चरेत् (याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृति १, ७, १७६)
- त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः
कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्वयं त्यजेत् ॥
(गीता १६, २१)
- तदिदमुच्यते यो चुद्धेः परतस्तु स इति । चुद्धे रपि यः परः सः कामः इत्यर्थः ॥
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ३-४२)
- भूतभावो मुनुष्यादिभावस्तदुद्भवकरो यो विसर्गः पञ्चम्यामाहृतावापः पुरुषवचसो भवन्ति इति श्रुतिसिद्धो योषित्-सम्बन्धजः स कर्मसंज्ञितस्तच्चाखिलं सानुवेद्ध-मुद्देजनीयतया च मुमुक्षुभिज्ञतिव्यम् (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ८, ३)
- न तथास्य भवेन्मोहो बन्धदचान्य-प्रसंगतः ।
योषित्संगाचया पुंसो यथा तत्संगि-संगतः ॥
(भागवतम् ३-३१-३५)
- धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोस्मि भरतर्यंभ (गीता ७, ११)
- यदकरं प्राप्तुभिज्ञन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्त पदं संयहेण प्रवक्ष्ये
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ८-११)
- यो मन्यते पर्ति मोहान्मनुमायामृष्यभायतीम् ।
स्त्रीत्वं स्त्रीसंगतः प्राप्तो वित्तापत्यगृहप्रदम् ॥
(भागवतम्)

10. तामात्मनो विजानीयात् पत्यपत्यगुहात्मकम् ।
देवोपसादितं मृत्युं मृगयोर्गायनं यथा ॥
(भागवतम्)

11. (अ) तदेतद् ब्रह्मादीनां भावनात्रयान्वयेन कर्मवश्यत्वम्, परब्रह्मभूतस्य वासुदेवस्य
निखिल-जगदुपकाराय स्वेच्छया स्वेनैव स्वेषणु देवादिष्ववतार इति च यष्ठेशो
शुभाश्रय-प्रकरणे सुव्यक्तमुक्तम् । (वैदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् १६६)
(आ) समस्ताः शक्तयश्चेता नृप यत्र प्रतिष्ठिताः ।
तद्विश्वरूपवैरूप्यं रूपमन्यद्वर्महत् ॥
तस्मात्समस्त-शक्तीनामाधारे तत्र चेतसः ।
कुर्वीत संस्थिति सा तु विज्ञेया शुद्धधारणा ॥
शुभाश्रयः म चित्तस्य सर्वगस्याचलात्मनः ।
त्रिभाव-भावनातीतो मुक्तये योगिनो नृप ॥
(विष्णुपुराण ६, ७, ७०-७६)

12. पाठो होमश्चातिथीनां सपर्या तपेण वलिः ।
एते पञ्च महायज्ञा ब्रह्मयज्ञादिनामकाः ॥
(शब्दार्थचिन्तामणाबुद्धतं वराहपुराणम्)

13. अग्निहोत्रादि तु तत्कार्यार्थं व तददर्शनात् (ब्रह्मसूत्र ४, १, १६)
तुलनात्मक वचनम्
तमेतं वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेन दानेन तपसानाशकेन
(ब्रह्मदारण्यक ४-४-२२)

14. यज्ञो दानं तपश्चेव पावनानि मनोपिण्यामू । (गीतायाम् १८, ५)

15. कुर्यात् पञ्च महायज्ञानपि गृहोक्तकर्मणा ।
(ब्रह्मतन्त्रान्तर्गतं जितन्ते स्तोत्रम् ५, २४)

16. अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः इत्यादि (गीता १६-१)

17. दुर्लेख्यनुद्विग्नमनाः (गीता २, ५६)

18. (अ) सुखेषु विगत-स्पृहः
(आ) स्वान्युपनिमन्वणे संगस्मयाकरणं पुनरनिष्ट-प्रसंगात्
(योगसूत्रम् ३, ५१)

19. तत्सिद्धिश्च विवेकादिभ्यो भवतीति वाक्यकारेणोक्तम् ।
तत्सिद्धिविवेक-विमोक्षाभ्यास-क्रिया-कल्याणावसादानुद्धर्येभ्यः सम्भवान्विचनाच्च
(सर्वदर्शनसंग्रहे रामानुजदर्शनम्)

20. Indian Philosophy, Volume II, Page 704.

21. मातुर्यंदग्रे जायन्ते द्वितीयं मौजि-वन्धनात् ।

22. मातुर्येविजननं द्वितीयं मौजिवन्धने,
तृतीयं यज्ञदीक्षायां द्विजस्य श्रुतिनोदत्तात् ॥ (मनुस्मृति २, १६६)

23. पुरुषो ह नारायणोक्तामयतातितिष्ठेयं सर्वाणि भूतानि । स वा एष पुरुषमेषः

पंचरात्रो यज्ञकतुभंवति । तस्याग्निष्ठोमः प्रथममहंवति । अयोक्त्योदातिरात्रो
थोक्त्योदातिरात्रोः । (शतपथ ब्राह्मणम्)

24. तापः पुण्ड्रं तथा नाम मन्त्रो यागश्च पंचमः
अमी हि पंच संस्काराः परमेकान्ति हेतवः ॥

25. स्नान-पूर्वाः क्रियाः सर्वा यतः सम्यक् फलप्रदाः ।
तस्मात् स्नानं पुरा कुर्याद्य इच्छेच्छेय आत्मनः ॥ (जयाख्यसंहिता ६, ७०)

26. (अ) आद्यात्मवाहयेदेवमृचा तु पुरुषोत्तमम् ।
द्वितीयात्मसनं दद्यात् पाद्यं चैव तृतीयया ॥
अर्ध्यंश्चतुर्थ्या दातव्यः पंचम्याचमनं तथा ।
पष्ठ्या स्नानं प्रकुर्वीति सप्तम्या वस्त्रधौतकम् ॥
यज्ञोपवीतं चाषम्या नवम्या गन्धमेव च ।
पुष्पं देयं दशम्या तु एकादश्या च धूपकम् ॥
द्वादश्या दीपकं दद्यात् त्रयोदश्या निवेदनम् ।
चतुर्दश्या नमस्कारं पंचदश्या प्रदक्षिणाः ॥
पोदश्योदासनं कुर्याच्छेष-कर्माणि पूर्ववत् ।
तच्च सर्वं जपेद्भूयः पौरुषं सूक्तमेव च ॥ (बृहत्पाराशर संहिता)
(आ) उपचारान्तराणामपि सर्वेषामेते पोदश प्रधानतमाः ।
(पंचरात्ररक्षा पृष्ठम् ५४)

27. श्रीपचारिक-सांस्पर्शिका ५५प्रवहारिका-दि-सकल-भोग-प्रदान-रूपो हि यागः
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ६, ३४)

28. एकस्यैव हि कालस्य वासरीयस्य नारद ।
श्राप्रभातं निशान्तं चै पंचधा परिकल्पना ॥ (जयाख्यसंहिता)

29. अवरां चिन्तनं व्याख्या ततः पाठ-समन्विता ।
स्वाध्याय-संज्ञं तद्विद्वि कालांशं मुनिसत्तम ॥
दिनावसाने सम्प्राप्ते पूजां कृत्वा समस्यसेत् ।
योगं निशावसाने च विश्रमैरन्तरीकृतम् ॥
पंचमो योगसंज्ञोसौ कालांशो ब्रह्मसिद्धिदः । (जयाख्यसंहिता वचनम्-
पंचरात्र रक्षायां ४८ पृष्ठे उद्धृतम्)

30. करिष्यमाण-योगोपकरणभूतस्य करणवर्गस्य विश्रान्तये स्वयमुपतमन्तीं निद्रां
न निवारयेत् (पंचरात्ररक्षा पृष्ठम् १६६)

31. एतो च स्वाध्याययोगावाहिकानुयायात्पूर्वमेव केषुचित्संहिता-विशेषेषु समा-
हृत्योपदिश्येते । (पंचरात्र रक्षा)

32. एवं विद्वानेकदापि कुर्वन् सनु पांचकालिकः । (भारद्वाज संहिता)

33. कृतं भवति वा सर्वमिज्ययैव हि केवलम् (भारद्वाज संहिता)

34. श्रकामः सर्वकामो वा मोक्षकाम उदारधीः ।
तीव्रेण भक्तियोगेन यजेत् पुरुषं परम् ॥ (भागवतम् २, ३, १०)

35. लौही दारुमयी शैली लेप्या लेख्या संस्कृती ।
मनोमयी मणिमयी प्रतिमाष्टविधा स्मृता ॥ (भागवतम् ११, २७, १२)

36. Twentyfour forms of the Deity, based on the position of the couch, disc, mace and lotus :—

	दक्षिणाप्र,	वामाप्र,	वामाधर,	दक्षिणाधर,
(Hands)	Right upper	Left upper	Left lower	Right lower
1. केशव	शंख	चक्र	गदा	पद्म
2. नारायण	पद्म	गदा	चक्र	शंख
3. माधव	चक्र	शंख	पद्म	गदा
4. गोविन्द	गदा	पद्म	शंख	चक्र
5. विष्णु	पद्म	शंख	चक्र	गदा
6. मधुमूदन	शंख	पद्म	गदा	चक्र
7. त्रिविक्रम	गदा	चक्र	शंख	पद्म
8. वामन	चक्र	गदा	पद्म	शंख
9. श्रीधर	चक्र	गदा	शंख	पद्म
10. हृषीकेश	चक्र	पद्म	शंख	गदा
11. पद्मनाभ	पद्म	चक्र	गदा	शंख
12. दामोदर	शंख	गदा	चक्र	पद्म
13. संकर्णण	शंख	पद्म	चक्र	गदा
14. वासुदेव	शंख	चक्र	पद्म	गदा
15. प्रबु मन	शंख	गदा	पद्म	चक्र
16. अनिरुद्ध	गदा	शंख	पद्म	चक्र
17. पुरुषोत्तम	पद्म	शंख	गदा	चक्र
18. अधोक्षज	गदा	शंख	चक्र	पद्म
19. नरसिंह	पद्म	गदा	शंख	चक्र
20. अच्युत	पद्म	चक्र	शंख	गदा
21. जनादेन	चक्र	शंख	गदा	पद्म
22. उपेन्द्र	गदा	चक्र	पद्म	शंख
23. हरि	चक्र	पद्म	गदा	शंख
24. कृष्ण	गदा	पद्म	चक्र	शंख

टी० ए० गोपीनाथ रात एम० ए० कृत ऐलिमैट्स

आव हिन्दू आइकोनोग्रेफी मद्रास १६१४ के आधार पर प्रस्तुत ।

37. (अ) श्रीमन्नारायण श्रीपुरुषोत्तम श्रीरंगनाथ मम नाथ नमोस्तुते ।

(आ) अनन्तानन्तशयन पुराण-पुरुषोत्तम ।

रंगनाथ जगन्नाथ नाथ तुम्यं नमोस्तुते ।

(श्रीरंगगद्यम्)

38. देशबन्धिचित्तस्य धारणा ।

(योगसूत्रम् ३, १)

39. तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता व्यानम् । (योगसूत्रम् ३, २)

40. तदेवायंमात्र-निर्भासं स्वरूपशून्यमिव समाधिः । (योगसूत्रम् ३, ३)

41. तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपेवस्थानम् (योगसूत्रम् १, १, ३)

42. (अ) प्रसन्नवदनं चारु-पथपत्रोपमेकणम् ।
चिन्तयेत्तन्मयो योगी समाधायात्म-मानसम्
तावद्यावद् दृढीभूता तत्रैव नृप धारणा ॥ (विष्णुपुराणम् ६, ७, ८०,८६)

(आ) प्रसन्नवदनाम्भोजं पद्मगर्भस्त्रिणश्चणम् ।
नीलोत्पलदलश्यामं शंखचक्रगदाधरम् ।
कीर्तन्यतीयं यशसं पूर्णश्लोक-यशस्करम् ।
व्यायेद्वें समग्रोगं यावन्न च्यवते मनः ॥ (भागवतम् ३, २८,
१३-१६)

43. (अ) उपासकानुरोदेन भजते मूर्ति-पंचकम् ।
तदर्चा-विभव-व्यूह-सूक्ष्मान्तर्यामि-संजितम् । (अहिकुंध्यसंहिता यतीन्द्रमत-
दीपिकायामुद्गता, पृष्ठम् ८६)

(आ) प्रतिमादिकमर्चा स्थात् (पूर्वोक्तम्)

(इ) लव्वानुग्रह आचार्यात्तेन सन्दर्शितागमः ।
महापुरुषमम्यचेनु मूर्त्याभिमतयाऽऽस्तमः ॥ (भागवतम् ११, ४, ४६)

44. (अ) वृष्णीणां प्रस्तरोसि । नमोस्तु दैवाय प्रस्तराय ॥ (अथवावेद १६, २, ६)

(आ) क इमं दशभिमंमेन्द्रं क्रीणाति धेनुभिः (ऋग्वेद ४, २४, १०)

45. दैवत-प्रतिमा हसन्ति (धर्मविदा-व्राह्मणं पंचम-प्रपाठको दशमः खण्डः)

46. खसी माल मूरति मुसकानी (रामचरित मानस)

CHAPTER IX

THE DOCTRINE OF SURRENDER

The idea of sin and its origin—The allegory of Puruñjaya—Sinners' hope in Šaranāgati—Šaranāgati, a vidyā—The self-consecration—Persons who would not resort to God—Six accessories of prapatti—Views of Sañhakopa, Lokā, cīrya and Šrinivasadāsa.

Excessive desire for wordly pleasures is apt to lead man into the path of sin which, according to Rāmānuja, consists in the indulgence in sensual pleasures.¹ The desire for pleasure is indeed insatiable,² hence man is naturally prone to sensual indulgence. Even when our senses are passive and the functions of our mind and intelligence are held in abeyance, our craving for pleasure persists and obscures our knowledge of the self. This is quite clear from the Gītā which teaches that kāma is stronger than intelligence even.³

A sinner wanders far from the Divine life inasmuch as he is overwhelmed by wordly desires and is absolutely indifferent to the teachings of saints and the scriptures. He forgets God, and God turns His back upon him. It is clearly brought out by the Bhāgavata which teaches that sin originates from the Lord's back.⁴ Sin when conjoined with Falschood (Mṛṣā) begets Deceit (Dambha) and Illusion (Maya).⁵

The finite self usually forgets that its home is in the Infinite and being thus alienated from God enters headlong into sin. The Bhāgavata gives a beautiful allegorical description of the soul's wordly life.⁶ Puruñjaya, a king, once saw in the province of Pañcala a city of nine gates, a beautiful lady waited upon by ten servants and a five-headed serpent as the door-keeper. Puruñjaya eventually made her his queen and together with her entered the harem, accompanied by his chief servant. He was so fond of the new queen that he imitated whatever she did and thus lived together happily. But his life of happiness was afterwards disturbed by the opposition of an enemy who marched against him with three hundred and sixty soldiers. The five-headed doorkeeper protected him

against the enemy for a century. It was not, however, the end of his misfortune ; for a daughter of Kāla accompanied by Bhaya and Prajvāra subsequently besieged his kingdom. Bhaya set his capital city on fire with the result that he was compelled to leave it. All this happened because of the fact that the king was so much under the influence of nescience that he completely forgot his original friend who alone could save him from all misfortune.

The allegory only serves to bring out how a soul is ruined under the influence of sensual enjoyment. Purañjaya is the individual soul, and his original friend is God. The country of Pāñcala answers to the objects of the five senses. The city of nine gates is the human body containing nine orifices. The lady attended by the maid-servants is the intellect accompanied by the five sense-organs and the five organs of action. The five-headed serpent symbolises the five breaths. The harem is the heart, and the chief servant of Purañjaya is mind. The imitation of the queen's behaviour by the king stands for identification of the soul with matter. The enemy with his soldiers represents the year consisting of three hundred and sixty days. The doorkeeper is the symbol of vitality. The daughter of Kāla is old age. Bhaya and Prajvāra are diseases of the mind and body. The king's departure from the capital signifies death.

Another allegory narrated in the Bhāgavata compares the soul's worldly experiences to a man's misery in wilderness.⁷

However, Rāmānuja, as previously noticed, holds that sin consists in indulgence in sensual pleasures and adds that it is an omission in so far as what should have been done is not done and a commission so far as what is prohibited by the scriptures is done.⁸ Sin is of various forms and results in miseries and sufferings of various descriptions. A time, however, comes when the soul becomes tired of the painful experiences resulting from sin and desires real peace and happiness, and makes efforts to attain them. But few are fortunate enough to attain success in these efforts. Only those who are placed on the right path are assured of success, whereas the rest are doomed to failure. But sinners should not lose heart. The Gītā holds out a hope to them also. It has conveyed to mankind the message that whoever takes refuge in God is purged of whatever sin he has committed.⁹ On this point Rāmānuja preaches that resignation to God (Śaraṇāgati) is a most sacred tenet of the scriptures. Hence he regarded Śaraṇāgati-vidyā (doctrine of Refuge) as of the highest significance to the ultimate good of life. It is, however, curious that he has not made distinct mention of this doctrine in his commentary to the Gītā nor even in his magnum opus,

the Śri-bhāṣya (commentary to the Brahma-sūtra). It is in his Gadyatraya that he dealt with this doctrine and confessed his omission of the same from his other works in these words : 'I bow down to that doctrine of refuge which was concealed by me even in the Śri-bhāṣya, but which is brought to light in the Gadyatraya.'¹⁰

The Doctrine of Self-consecration

Man can hardly find real happiness in the affairs of the mundane life. He therefore tries to free himself from them. He learns from the teachings of saints and the scriptures that the real happiness can be had only in the kingdom of God (Brahma-loka). Thus enlightened, he feels the urge to retire from worldly life and to give up all desire for worldly pleasures and even his allegiance to ordinary creeds. He realises that he had gone astray in the past and hastens to take to the path that can lead him up to his saviour. Thus does he come to assume a new outlook and a new attitude—the attitude of surrender which seeks the protection of God from the misery of the world. In fact, this attitude consists in complete resignation to the will of God. Once a man is possessed of this attitude, he is assured of glorious future. For one who has completely resigned himself to God wins His compassion and thus attains emancipation from all evils.

It is interesting to note that the doctrine of Śaraṇāgati is as old as the Vedas. Even the sages of the hoary Rgveda invoked the gods for help.¹¹ The Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad is also explicit on this point as "Who in the beginning created Brahmā and furnished him with the Vedas, to that Deity, the illuminer of the intellect, I surrender myself with a desire for salvation."¹² Again, in the Gitā Śri Kṛṣṇa has said, 'Those who resort to me as their refuge cross this māyā which is hard for others to ford.'¹³

It would be interesting to trace the origin of the word 'Śaraṇāgati'. It is peculiar to the Pāñcarātra literature and was in common use in the hands of the Vaiṣṇava ācāryas. Although the word by itself does not occur in the earlier Upaniṣads and the Gitā, yet it is to be traced in the following expressions occurring in them :

- (a) Śaraṇam prapadye¹⁴
- (b) Mām prapadyante¹⁵
- (c) Śaraṇam gaccha¹⁶
- (d) Śaraṇam vraja¹⁷

The Gitā precept 'Śaraṇam gaccha', however, seems to me the foundation of the idea conveyed by the word 'śaraṇāgati'. It might of course be objected that what could properly be derived from that

precept is *śaraṇa-gati* and not *śaraṇāgati*, because the verb occurring in the phrase is 'gaccha' and not 'āgaccha', which is involved in *śaraṇāgati*. But the real point is that the act of resignation, while viewed from the standpoint of the individual who resigns, would be *śaraṇa-gati*, whereas it would be *śaraṇāgati*, when it is viewed from the standpoint of God to whom the individual resigns himself. The latter standpoint is obviously higher and hence *śaraṇāgati* is more significant than *śaraṇa-gati*.

The word 'śaraṇa' (Shelter) may have three meanings : first, it denotes the place where a person becomes free from all suffering ; secondly, it refers to the very act of seeking refuge ; thirdly, it implies the person in whom refuge is sought.¹⁸ *Śaraṇāgati* obviously does not consist in the physical act of going to a certain place. It is an attitude which enables the individual soul to discover that God is the ultimate end of realization and that the means to that realization also lies through God.¹⁹ Hence Rāmānuja recognises a *vidyā* (a science and an art) relating to *śaraṇāgati* which he calls *śaraṇāgati-vidyā*. This *vidyā*, according to him, deals with the means of the realization of God. It is believed that *prapatti* which is generally used as a synonym of *śaraṇāgati* is a form of *bhakti*. For Rāmānuja, *prapatti* precedes *bhakti*. It consists in the surrender of the individual to God, which is the condition of devotion or *bhakti*. This point Rāmānuja has made sufficiently clear in his commentary on the *Gitā* (7. 15).²⁰

Bhakti as ordinarily understood, comprises many details such as listening to the scriptures, reading of devotional texts, erection of temples, formal worship of image, pilgrimage etc. which obviously involve study of the scriptures, expenditure of money, perseverance and concentration of mind on the part of the devotee. Obviously, then, not many people can be so privileged as to resort to *bhakti*. But that may not matter. For those who cannot have *bhakti* within their easy reach are open to assume the attitude of *prapatti* and throw themselves at the mercy of God by self-surrender. Thus the distinction between the God-realization as the end and the means to it is conquered. Man in his helplessness may renounce all and seek refuge in God. His attitude at this stage may be best expressed thus. 'The ocean of transmigration is hard to cross. I am destitude, helpless and afraid. Save me, O Ocean of mercy, by your grace.²¹ I have committed thousands of wrongs, and am fallen into the depth of this fearful world. I am helpless, and have chosen you as my refuge. Accept me through your grace only'.²² Indeed, no worldly tie can bind one who is thus infused with craving for supreme bliss. Father and mother, wife and son, brother and friend, food and jewellery,

house and property have no importance to one who surrenders himself to God.²³ This is very well brought out by Vibhīṣaṇa who spoke to Rāma thus: 'I have forsaken Laṅkā, deserted my friends and abandoned my wealth. In you lie my kingdom, life and happiness. you give shelter to the refugees and I have come to take refuge in you.'²⁴

Rāmānuja says that there are four types of vicious persons who would never resort to God. They are:—

- (a) people of perverted understanding: those who think what is God's own as theirs,
- (b) ignoble persons who do not love God,
- (c) those who have lost the understanding concerning God by means of adverse reasoning, and
- (d) those who envy the glory of God.²⁵

According to the followers of Rāmānuja, the doctrine of self-surrender is the essence of the teachings of the Gītā and the scriptures in general. It is therefore, as they hold, worthy of serious attention and deserves to be practised. Lord Kṛṣṇa whom both the Gītā and the Bhāgavata regard as the Supreme, declares this doctrine to be characterised by the greatest inwardness.²⁶ Those who are sinful will find it impossible to destroy their many and various sins the destruction of which is the precondition of the adoption of the career of bhakti. In view of this the despairing soul welcomes the divine assurance that whosoever takes refuge in God is purged of all sins.²⁷ Such a soul realises that the service of God is the summary of all knowledge.²⁸

The Ahirbudhnya-saṁhitā has enumerated the following six accessories of prapatti:—²⁹

1. Determination to live in conformity with God's wishes. It is indeed the attitude of the devotee to remain attuned to the will of God. He is fully convinced that his good lies in God's decree. Hence he rests content with the circumstance in which he is placed in the belief that God wills him to be so circumstanced.
2. Non-resistance. The true devotee never rebels against, nor even resents, divine decree. He regards the scriptures as of divine origin and can never think of violating scriptural injunctions.
3. Firm belief in divine guardianship. The devotee firmly believes that God is the Supreme Saviour of all at all places and at all times.
4. The choice of God as the saviour. The true devotee does not rest content merely with the belief that God is his saviour, but

goes further in ceremonially choosing God as his saviour in the same manner as a bride chooses her bridegroom.

5. The feeling of absolute dependence and destitution. With a feeling of complete dependence upon God, the devotee relinquishes the idea of his independence, and cherishes the faith that everything concerning him and even his self are dependent upon God. God alone is the devotee's precious possession. Nothing else does he own.

6. Self-resignation. Whatever a devotee can call his own—not excepted his own self—he surrenders to the Deity. Yāmunācārya said, "Whatever this I may be amongst the body etc. and whatever quality it may possess, I offer my 'I' at your feet, O Lord."

Śrinivāsadāsa has reduced the last two items of prapatti (viz the feeling of destitution and self-resignation) into one, and has thus maintained only five accessories of prapatti. Again, he holds that whereas only the twice-born are eligible for bhakti, the way of prapatti is open to all. Śrinivāsadāsa regards prapatti as a phase of bhakti,³⁰ whereas Lokācārya holds that bhakti and prapatti are different from each other.³¹ Śāthakopa's view is in agreement with that of Lokācārya.³² Moreover, both Śāthakopa and Lokācārya analysed prapatti into two aspects : the ārta-prapatti and the drpta-prapatti. In the case of the former, a devotee is anxious to get rid of the body as early as possible, whereas in that of the latter he consents to await the prescribed period of time for the same purpose.³³ Śrinivāsadāsa too has accepted this analysis.

It may be of interest to note how the followers of Rāmānuja differed among themselves on the question of 'surrender to God.' According to the Vādgalaïs, resignation to God is one among several ways of realising the highest end. Only those who are incapable of adopting other means should resort to it. A resigned soul should continue to perform duties, because that is a way of pleasing God. The six factors of prapatti are sixfold preparations preceding itself. If a person of resignation (prapanna) deviates from the prescribed routine of duties, atonement for him consists in repeating the act of prapatti as often as he has deviated. A prapanna belonging to an inferior caste deserves only so much respect from the people of superior castes as can be shown in words only. But the Tengalaïs differ. According to them, prapatti is the only way leading to God. They go further in holding that it is God Himself but is spoken of as a way leading to Him for the sake of convenience only. The

way of prapatti is meant for all : it does not matter whether all are capable or incapable of following other paths. For a person who has already resigned himself to God there is no need to please God by performing actions. God's pleasure is spontaneous. It does not depend upon man's actions. One may, however, ever perform actions only to set an example to others. The six sections of prapatti are not its preceding conditions, but are really, its effects. Prapatti is to be performed all at once. It need not be repeated even by one who deviates from the prescribed routine of duties. Again, a prapanna of an inferior caste deserves as much respect from others as does a person belonging to a superior caste.³⁴

Now surrender on the part of the individual soul pre-supposes divine grace. If there be no divine grace for an individual, his self-surrender is impossible. The Sanskrit words for grace are *prasāda*, *kṛpā* and *dayā* which have been used by saints and philosophers and in the scriptures too. The *Gitā* and the *Upaniṣads* used *prasāda* in the sense of God's grace. Literally, *prasāda* means pleasure which in the case of a king or God, is grace. But it is now commonly used to denote the object granted by a priest to those who approach a deity in a temple with a worshipful attitude. 'Prasāda' primarily means grace and it is in this sense that Rāmānuja understands the word when he states in his commentary to *Gitā* : 'Through God's grace one overcomes all wordly obstacles and reaches Him.'³⁵ The *kaṭha Upaniṣad* says that a person devoid of any desires realises God through His grace,³⁶ and the *Śvetāśvatara* also reiterates the same point.³⁷ The 'prasāda' of the *Gitā* and the *Upaniṣads* is 'poṣaṇa' of the *Bhāgavata*,³⁸ which literally means nourishment. Since divine grace (anugraha) nourishes the spiritual life of the devotee, it is called 'poṣaṇa'. 'Puṣṭi' is another etymological form of the same word. It is the title of one of the ten principal topics of the *Bhāgavata*.³⁹ Vallabha lays the greatest stress on God's mercy, hence his interpretation of *Vedānta* is called 'the path of grace' or 'Puṣṭi-mārga'. It may be added that the 'prasāda' of the *Gitā* and the 'poṣaṇa' of the *Bhāgavata* seem to have originally been the 'sumati' of the *Rgveda*, which was cherished by those who were devoted to Divine service.⁴⁰

References

1. (अ) विषयानुभव-रूपं पापम् (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ३, ३६)
 (आ) अयं कामः देहिनम्—आत्मज्ञान-विमुखं विषयानुभवपरं करोति
 (पूर्वोक्तम् ३, ४०)
- (इ) प्रकृत्यात्माभिमानरूपेण सम्बन्धहेतुना पापेन (पूर्वोक्तम् ५, १०)
2. अस्य जन्तोऽर्जानिनो ज्ञानस्वभावस्यात्मविषयं ज्ञानमेतेन कामकारेण विषयव्यामोह
 जननेन नित्यवैरिणाऽऽवृतं दुष्टुरेण पूर्त्यनहंविषयेणानलेन च पर्याप्तिरहितेन
 (पूर्वोक्तम् ३, १६)
3. सर्वेषु बुद्धिपर्यन्तेषु परतेष्वपीच्छापरपर्यायः कामो रजः-समुद्रवो वत्तंते चेत्स
 एवैतानि इन्द्रियाण्यपि स्वविषयेषु वर्तयित्वाऽऽत्मज्ञानं निरुणद्धि । तदिदमुच्यते यो
 बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः इति । बुद्धेरपि यः परः स काम इत्यर्थः ।
 (पूर्वोक्तम् ३, ४२)
4. अधमः पृष्ठतो यस्मात् (भागवतम् ३, १२, २५)
5. मृषा धर्मस्य भायाऽसीत्, दम्भं मायां च शत्रुहन् ।
 असूत मिथुनं ततु नित्रहति जग्नुद्ग्रजः ॥ (पूर्वोक्तम् ४, ८, २)
6. आसीत्पुरंजनो नाम राजा राजन्वृहच्छ्रवाः ।
 तस्याऽविजात-नामाऽसीत्सखाऽविजात-चेत्प्रितः ॥
- इत्यादि पुरंजनोपास्यानम् (भागवतम् ५, २५, १०)
7. दुरत्येऽवन्यजया निवेशितो रजस्तमः-सत्वविभक्त-कर्मद्वक् ।
 स एष सायोऽर्थ-परः परिभ्रमन्तु भवाटवीं याति न शर्मं विन्दति ॥
 इत्यादि भवाटवी वर्णनम् (भागवतम् ५, १३, १)
8. अकृत्यकरण—कृत्याकरणरूपेभ्यः पापेभ्यः (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १८, ६६)
9. अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षविद्यामि मा शुचः (गीता १८, ६६)
 अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो यथोदित-स्वरूपभक्त्यारम्भविरोधिभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापेभ्यो
 मोक्षविद्यामि, मा शुचः (रामानुजभाष्यम्)
10. शारीरकेऽपि भाष्ये या गोपिता शरणागतिः ।
 अत्र गद्यत्रये व्यक्तां तां विद्यां प्रणातोस्म्यहम् ॥ (गद्यत्रयम्)
11. हिरण्यपाणिमूत्रये सवितारमुपह्लये । स चेत्ता देवता पदम्
 (ऋग्वेदः १-२२-५)
 इहेन्द्रारणीमुपह्लये वरुणानीं स्वस्तये । अग्नायीं सोमपीतये
 (पूर्वोक्तम् १, २२, १२)
12. यो ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्वं यो वै वेदांश्च प्रहिणोति तस्मै ।
 तं ह देवमात्मबुद्धिप्रकाशं मुमुक्षुर्व शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ॥
 (वेताश्वतरोपनिषद् ६, १८)
13. दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
 मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ (गीता ७: १४)

14. शरणमहं प्रपद्ये (इवेताश्वतरोपनिषद् ६, १८)
 15. (अ) मां प्रपद्यन्ते (गीता ४, ११)
 (आ) मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते (गीता ७, १४)
 16. तमेव शरणं गच्छ (गीता १८, ६२)
 17. मामेकं शरणं व्रज (गीता १८, ६६)
 18. (अ) शरणं गुह-रक्षितो: (ग्रमरकोष ३, ३, ५३)
 (आ) शरणमिष्टस्य प्रापकतयाऽनिष्टस्य निवारणतया समाधयणीयश्चेतनः
 19. कर्त्तर्माराध्य प्राप्यमुपाये चानुधत्स्व (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ६, १८)
 20. भगवदुपासनापादिनीं भगवत्प्रपत्तिम् (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ७-१५)
 21. अनायमगति भीरुं दयया परया हरे:
 मामुद्रर दयासिन्धो संसाराव्ये: सुदुस्तरात् ॥
 (ब्रह्मतन्त्रान्तर्गतं जितन्ते स्तोत्रम्)
 22. अपराध सहस्रभाजनं पतितं भीमभवार्णवोदरे,
 अगति शरणागतं हरे कृपया केवलमात्मसात्कृष्ण ॥ (पूर्वोक्ततम्)
 23. पितरं मातरं दारानु पुत्रानु बन्धून् सखीन् गुरुन्
 रत्नानि धनधान्यानि क्षेत्राणि च गृहाणि च ।
 सर्वधर्माश्च सन्त्यज्य सर्वकामाश्च साक्षराम्,
 लोकविक्रान्त-चरणो शरणं तेज्वरं विभी ॥ (शरणागतिगच्छम्)
 24. भवन्तं सर्वं भूतानां शरण्यं शरणं गतः
 परित्यक्ता मया लंका मित्राणि च धनानि च
 भवद्गतं हि राज्यं मे जीवितं च सुखानि च ॥
 (रामायणम् ६-१६-४, ५)
 25. (अ) मूढा विपरीतज्ञानाः
 (आ) नराधमाः—मदौन्मुख्यानहीः
 (इ) माययापहृतज्ञानास्तु मद्विषयं मदैश्वर्यं च ज्ञानं प्रस्तुतं येषां तदसंभावना-
 पादिनीभिः कृत्युक्तिभिरपहृतं ते तथोक्ताः
 (ई) आसुरं भावमाभितास्तु मद्विषयं मदैश्वर्य-विषयं च ज्ञानं सुहृष्टमुपपन्नं येषां
 द्वेषायैव भवति । उत्तरोत्तराः पापिष्ठतमाः ।
 (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ७, १५)
 26. सर्वंगुह्यातमं भूयः श्रुत्यु मे परमं वचः ।
 इष्टोसि मे हृष्टमिति ततो वद्यामि ते हृतम् ॥
 मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो यद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
 मामेवैष्णवसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोसि मे ॥
 सर्वंधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
 अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ (गीता १८, ६४-६६)

27. भक्तियोगारम्भ-विरोध्यनादि-काल-संचित-नाना विधानन्त-पापानुग्रहान् तत्प्राय-
श्चित्तरूपान् कुच्छु-चांद्रायण-कूर्माण्ड-वैश्वानर-प्राजापत्य-व्रातपति-यवित्रेष्टि-त्रिवृद-
गिनष्टोमादिकान् नाना विधानन्तान् त्वया परिमितकालवर्तिना दुरनुष्ठान् सर्वं धर्मान्
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १८, ६६)

28. परमात्मा हरिः स्वामी स्वतो हूं तस्य किकरः ।
कैकयं मस्तिला वृत्तिरित्येप ज्ञानसंग्रहः ॥ (भारद्वाजसंहिता पृष्ठ १२)

29. पोडा हि वेदविदुषो वदन्त्येनं महामुने ।
आनुकूल्यस्य संकल्पः प्रातिकूल्यस्य वर्जनम् ॥
रक्षिष्यतीति विश्वासो गोप्तृत्व-वरणं तथा ।
आत्मनिष्ठेष-कार्पण्ये धृविधा शरणागतिः ॥
(अहिन्दुं ज्यसंहिता ३७-२७, २६)

30. वेदनध्यानोपासनादि-शब्दवाच्या भक्तिः प्रपत्येगिका (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका ७)

31. (ग्र) उपायः पंचविधः कर्मयोग-ज्ञानयोग-भक्तियोग-प्रपत्तियोगाचार्याभिमानयोग-
भेदात् । (अर्थपंचक जे० आर० ए० एस० १६१०, पृष्ठ ६०१)
(ग्रा) भक्तियोगस्तु तैलधारावदविच्छिन्न-स्मृतिसन्तानहृष्टामापाद्य प्रारब्ध-
कर्माविसानपर्यन्तं पुनः पुनरनुभव-प्रकर्षेण साक्षात्कारत्वोपादानं प्रपत्तियोग-
स्त्वेवं विधज्ञान-सहकृतभक्ति-योगाशक्तस्य, प्रपत्तियोगश्च सुकरः शीघ्र-
फलदः । (पूर्वोक्तम् पृष्ठम् ६०२)

32. भक्तिस्तु सदाचार्य-समेधिता सर्वस्मादधिक-स्नेहपूर्विका तैलधारावदविच्छिन्न-
स्मृति-सन्तानहृषा । प्रपत्तिस्तु स्ववरणं कृत-दोष वर्जिता... स्वरूपानुग्रहान् च ।
(अर्थपंचक-विवेकः पृष्ठम् ४६-५१)

33. (ग्र) सेयं प्रपत्तिरात्ता हृष्टा चेति द्विविधा । तत्रात्ता प्रपत्तिः...
हे स्वामिन् त्वत्कैकयं-विरोधि हेयमिदं शरीरं शीघ्रमेव जहीति या प्राथना ।
हृष्टा प्रपत्तिस्तु... यावहे हमवस्थानम् । (पूर्वोक्तम् पृष्ठ ५२-५३)
(ग्रा) स तु द्विविध आत्म-प्रपत्तियोगो हस्तप्रपत्तियोगश्च ।
(लोकाचार्य-विरचितो नारायणयत्यनुदितोऽर्थपंचकः—जे. आर. ए. एस. १६१०,
पृष्ठ ६०२)

34. भेद-स्वामि-कृपा-कलान्यगतिपु श्रीव्याप्त्युपायत्वयोः ।
तद्वात्सल्य-दया-निरुक्ति-वचसोन्यसि च तत्कर्त्तरि ॥
धर्मत्वाग-विरोधयोः स्वविहिते न्यासांग-हेतुत्वयोः ।
प्रायशिच्चतविधौ तदीयभजनेऽनुव्याप्ति-कैवल्ययोः ॥ A History of Indian
Philosophy, Vol III, Page 93 (दासगुप्तोदृतः—ग्रष्टादशभेद-निरायंः)

35. (ग्र) सर्वाणि सांसारिकाणि दुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादादेव तरिष्यसि ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १८-५८)

(ग्रा) मत्प्रसादाच्छाश्वतं पदमव्ययमविकलं प्राप्नोति । (पूर्वोक्तम् १८-५६)

36. तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको,
धातुः प्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ।
(कठोपनिषद्, प्रथमाध्याये द्वितीयवल्ली २०)

37. तमक्तुः पश्यति वीतशोको,
धातुः प्रसादान्महिमानमीशम् । (रवेता० ३, २०)

38. पोषणन्तदनुशेहः (भागवतम् २, १०, ४)

39. अत्र सर्गो विसर्गेश्च स्वानं पोषण मूत्रयः।
मन्वन्तरेशानुकथा निरोधो मुक्तिरात्रयः ॥ (भागवतम् २, १०, १)

40. महस्ते विष्णो सुर्मति भजामहे । (ऋग्वेद १, १५६, ३)

CHAPTER X

DIVINE COMMUNION

The various inclinations of man—The nature of individual soul—The Viśiṣṭādvaita eschatology—The success of the soul—The nature of salvation—Isolation (Kaivalya)—The powers of a liberated soul—The stuff of the body in emancipation—The Kingdom of God—No fear of fall from the heaven of Viṣṇu.

The Various Inclinations of Man

Human nature has three characteristics relating respectively to the three elements of *prakṛti*: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. When the quality of *sattva* is predominant in an individual, he is inclined to perform righteous actions. The *rajas* in a predominant state inclines him towards the acquisition of things. The preponderance of *tamas* fosters lust. Some people depend upon their own efforts, some rely on divine grace and some while taking to the path of grace, worship gods other than Viṣṇu for the attainment of the three ends of life (*trivarga*). The *Bhāgavata* recommends the worship of Śiva to one who is desirous of learning, and that of Umā to one who is desirous of matrimony.¹ But there is no dearth of people who are exclusively devoted to Viṣṇu. They worship Him alone for the fulfilment of their desires, whether for wordly pleasures or the bliss of emancipation. Those who have no particular desire, or those who are desirous of all sorts of wordly pleasures, or those who aim at freedom from wordly miseries are advised by the *Bhāgavata* to worship Viṣṇu, the Supreme Person, with deep devotion.² Viṣṇu is also adored for the fulfilment of specific desires. He is invoked, for instance, in the *Rgveda*, to fill His hands—both right and left—with wealth from heaven or earth or the intermediate world, and to bestow it on the devotees.³ Śri is similarly prayed to, in the Śri-sukta, for the grant of all sorts of wordly things—food, gold, cattle, servants, physical fitness, long life and progeny.⁴

There may be four different types of devotees as enumerated in the *Gītā* as follows:—⁵

- (a) Those who are in calamity (*ārta*)
- (b) Those who are desirous of knowledge (*jijñāsu*)
- (c) Those who aspire after prosperity (*arthārthi*), and

(d) Those who possess knowledge (jñāni).

According to Rāmānuja, the first and the third come under one and the same head inasmuch as both desire wordly pleasures;⁶ whereas the second and the fourth differ in that they desire emancipation.

The Nature of Individual Soul

A jijñāsu neither desires the removal of wordly needs nor does he hanker after wordly gains. He is only keen on attaining knowledge of the real nature of the self.⁷ The individual self in its purity is devoid of all qualities of matter. It cannot be destroyed by weapons, fire, water or wind.⁸ It is, of course, different from God, and the difference is due not merely to its having an external adjunct (upādhi) as held by Advaita Vedānta but is real (pāramārthika).⁹ Yet the frailties of the body do not contaminate the individual soul's essential nature. Nor can it be understood as an object ; it is the subject, the knower, and hence it is called 'kṣetrajña' or knower of the field i.e. the physical sphere.¹⁰ The phenomena of birth and death and other vicissitudes pertaining to the body do not touch the soul. It is unborn (aja), eternal (nitya) and unchanging (sāśvata). Though old, yet is new (purātano pi navah). Free from decay, it is called imperishable (akṣara). It is indiscernible (avyakta), because it is not perceptible by the senses. It is indefinable (anirdeśya), because its nature cannot be expressed by such words as 'god' and 'man'. Although it is present in the bodies of gods etc (sarvatra-ga), yet it cannot be conceived in terms of these (acintya) inasmuch as it is essentially different from the latter. Not being subject to change in its contact with different bodies, it is called uniform (kūtastha) ; and being generally unchangeable, it is called immovable (acala).

Rāmānuja arrives at the above conception of the self through the interpretation of Chapter II of the Gītā which deals with the question of immortality of the soul and Chapter XII of the same texts which express preference for meditation on Śrī Kṛṣṇa in contrast with meditation on the individual self. Śaṅkara, however, interprets the same texts differently. In fact, Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja differ fundamentally from each other with regard to the question of the nature of the individual soul as well as on several other points. In dealing with the third verse of Chapter XII*, Śaṅkara has interpreted

2. *Mayyāvesya mano ye mām
nityayuktī upāsate
śraddhayū parayopetī
te me yuktatamī matāḥ

3. Ye tvakṣaram anirdeśyam
avyaktam paryupāsate
sarvatraगम acintyāḥ ca
kūtastham acalam dhruvam

the 'imperishable' as Nirguna Brahman,¹¹ and the meditation recommended in the preceding verse is, according to him, the meditation on Saguna Brahman.¹² According to Rāmānuja, on the other hand, the third verse contains a reference to the meditation on the self, i.e., the devotee's own individual soul;¹³ and the meditation alluded to in the preceding verse is, on his view, the meditation on God, the Supreme Reality.¹⁴ Again, Śaṅkara understands the word 'sarvatra-ga' occurring in the 3rd verse as meaning all-pervading Brahman, whereas it means all-entering jīva according to Rāmānuja. What Rāmānuja, really, wishes to emphasize here is that since the individual soul may find a place in the bodies of gods etc, it is 'sarvatra-ga'.¹⁵ The same is his interpretation of the word 'sarva-ga' occurring in the 24th verse in Chapter II. Since it is the soul's nature to penetrate into all elements, argues Rāmānuja, it is called 'sarvagata'.¹⁶ Being subtler than all elements, he continues, the soul cannot be penetrated by them; and hence it is immune from the changes consequent upon the operation of matter.¹⁷

The Gitā states that the individual soul is two-fold viz. the perishable (kṣara) and the imperishable (akṣara).¹⁸ Kṣara is the soul which identifies itself with the body,¹⁹ whereas the soul in its purity is akṣara.²⁰ All individual souls, when they are in a state of bondage are kṣara, and the emancipated once are akṣara. God transcends the former and excels the latter; hence He is known as the Sublime Person (Puruṣottama)—one who pervades and sustains the three worlds (Loka). The popular conception of the three lokas (worlds) is that there are three regions called paradise, earth and hades i.e., svarga, martya and pātāla. But Rāmānuja holds that the three lokas are:

- (a) inanimate matter,
- (b) souls in bondage, and
- (c) emancipated souls.²¹

The individual soul is characterised by Rāmānuja as *cit*. There are as many souls in the world, on his view, as there are individual beings. They are really many, and God is their great synthesist inasmuch as He is the Inner Controller (Antaryāmin) of all the souls. This synthetical view of Rāmānuja, however, differs from the conception of both Vasiṣṭha and Śaṅkara who regard all individual souls as identical with Brahman.

People who are engrossed in worldly enjoyments and those who worship God for worldly success have to tread, after casting off their mortal coil, on the path of darkness or ignorance. They are, indeed, extroverts who mind the business of the world and follow

the path of 'pravṛtti'. The other path is the bright one of 'nivṛtti'. Those who are introverts and are given to 'self-examination, turn away from worldly affairs and follow this path. Only those who are capable of concentrating their minds on the true self or of meditating upon God are alone fit to proceed on the bright path, the path of knowledge or devotion. The dark path, on the other hand, is associated with transmigration, and a man of ignorance who is bound to follow this path must remain tied down to the field of day-to-day activities even if he be transported to the abode of Brahmā;²² but the same is not true of a man of knowledge or devotion who has realised God.²³

According to Śankara, a man of true knowledge remains where he was.²⁴ Only his individual soul merges into the Universal Soul on his bodily death. This is called 'quick release' (Sadyomukti), according to Advaita Vedānta. Śankara believed in another form of release—the gradual or slow release (krama-mukti) of those who meditate upon the Lower Brahman. The worshippers of Iṣvara ascend to the path of brightness, gradually reach the state of divinity, remain there for a very long time, and finally merge, along with the Lower Brahman, into the Higher Brahman, or the Universal Soul.²⁵ But, according to Rāmānuja, all people of true knowledge or devotion have to attain to the state of Divinity ; and the question of their merging in Him never arises.

A man of knowledge lives in the world in a state of detachment just as a lotus remains in water.²⁶ The activities of such a man aim not at the realisation of selfish ends but at the general good of the world (loka-saṅgraha). If he happens to do anything wrong, he is unaffected by its consequences. For, as the Gītā says, 'One who is not an egoist, is not fettered, even if he kills all beings.'²⁷

On his attainment of true knowledge all the accumulated (sañcita) actions of a person—actions both good and evil—are at once rendered inactive.²⁸ The fire of knowledge burns out the actions, as it were. Besides, man's present actions also do not bear fruit after he attains true knowledge. But the results of those actions, either good or bad, that have begun to operate (prārabdha) must be experienced even by a man of knowledge or devotion. For they can be exhausted only by enjoyment or suffering.²⁹

The Viśiṣṭādvaita Eschatology

The departing soul of a self-realized person shakes off all good and evil along with his dead body.³⁰ For he outgrows the necessity of either while ascending the path of 'Arcis'. The Chāndogya says that the ascending soul shakes off all vice, just as a horse gets rid

of the dust by shaking his hair.³¹ Kauśitaki likewise states that the ascending soul is set free from his good and evil deeds. His friends benefit from his good actions, and his enemies suffer the consequences of the evil ones.³²

A holy soul departs through 'suṣumṇā', one of the nerves of the brain. Blessed by the Supreme Person within himself, he finds his way for pilgrimage from the temporal to the eternal.³³ Proceeding on the bright path, the emancipated soul receives the help of Arcis etc. The path is, therefore, called Arcirādi. According to some, Arcis and others are, as it were, halting places for the departing soul, while others hold that they indicate but divisions of time. The Brahma-sūtra differs from both the views and holds that Arcis etc. are conscious guides.³⁴ Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja agree with Bādarāyaṇa on this point maintaining that the word 'Arcis' means the superintending deity of light and the word 'dina' means the superintending deity of day-time and so on.³⁵ The following are the guides in order of precedence :—³⁶

1. The deity of light,
2. The deity of day,
3. The deity of bright fortnight,
4. The deity of six months of the northern solstice,
5. The deity of year,
6. The deity of the air,
7. The deity of the sun,
8. The deity of the moon,
9. The deity of the lightning,
10. Varuṇa,³⁷
11. Indra,³⁸ and
12. Prajāpati.

Prajāpati shows the way to the river Virajā which, according to the Padma-purāṇa, is the demarcation between the material world (pradhāna) and Heaven (paramavyoma).³⁹ The soul remains associated with its subtle body upto this stage. But as soon as the soul, on its way to the Brahma-loka, takes a dip into the river, its subtle body is cast away. As regards the constituents of the subtle body, the Advaita and Śaṅkhya hold divergent views. The following lists will make the point clear :-

According to Advaita (as interpreted by Sadānanda)⁴⁰

Intellect	...	I
Mind	...	I
Sense-organs	...	5
Action-organs	...	5
Vital airs	...	5
		—
		17

According to Sāṅkhya⁴¹

Intellect	...	I
Ego	...	I
Mind	...	I
Sense-organs	...	I
Action-organs	...	5
Tanmātrās	...	5
		—
		18

The Visiṣṭādvaita view regarding the subtle body mostly tallies with that of Sāṅkhya. However, when the subtle body is thus cast away, some non-human person,⁴² specially an angel, greets the departing soul with a touch. In consequence, the soul assumes a form similar to that of the Deity probably with the exception that it cannot, as the Bhāgavata says, have Śrivatsa and Kaustubha which are the marks exclusively belonging to the Deity.⁴³

The Success of the Soul

The guiding angel escorts the emancipated soul to the kingdom of God where welcome is accorded to the entrant in various ways. Just as a mother feels happy over the victory of her son in his struggle with his enemy, so Lakṣmi, the motherly aspect of the Deity, expresses Her felicitations on the soul's crossing the ocean of worldly life which is, really, its triumph over matter. In Her various forms such as Śri, Bhū, Lila, She comes forward along Her attendants (ambāyu)⁴⁴ to admit the son to his eternal home. The released soul then approaches the Divine throne of unlimited might (amitaujas).⁴⁵ An affectionate talk then ensues between the Father and the son. The son now comes to his journey's end, and his efforts are crowned with final success in his being absorbed in the Father's sweet words and loving glance and above all His parental embrace, the long-cherished Brahma-saṁsparśa. The Vadgalais interpret this as the soul's gaining God, whereas the Tengalais hold that this is God's gaining the soul. Rāmānuja

is not, however, clear on this point. He seems to agree with the latter, as the concluding words of his *Śrī-bhāṣya* indicate. He says "Why should the Supreme Person let the released soul go away from Him, for He has Himself said in the *Gītā* : 'such a great soul is very rare as says that *Vāsudeva* is the highest goal for him'?"⁴⁶ Rāmānuja's meaning here seems to be that God's difficulty of finding a great soul is solved when a released soul reaches Him. The release of a soul is thus a definite gain to God.

According to Rāmānuja, it is with the personal God that the released soul remains in communion. God in this aspect is technically called *Sūkṣma*⁴⁷ and *Para*⁴⁸ by Rāmānuja. The word 'Para' has several meanings such as 'distant'⁴⁹, 'prior'⁵⁰, 'another'⁵¹, 'enemy'⁵², 'best'⁵³, individual soul⁵⁴, the life-time of *Brahmā*⁵⁵, transcendent⁵⁶ and God.⁵⁷ It has been used to denote distance⁵⁸ and comprehensiveness⁵⁹ in the *Vaiśeṣika* system. But Rāmānuja uses it in the senses of excellent and transcendent. Etymologically, the word is derived from *Pr*-to protect and to fulfil.⁶⁰ *Para* is, therefore, He who protects and fulfils the desires of his devotees. From the philological point of view the word originally had the sense of an adjective, but as time went on it gained currency as a noun. Bādarāyaṇa has used it more than once in his *Brahma-sūtra* in the sense of God.⁶¹ It denotes, however, only the personal aspect of God in *Pāñcarātra* literature.⁶² Rāmānuja has used the word both as an adjective meaning 'the Supreme'⁶³ and as a noun in the sense of Personal God.⁶⁴

The Nature of Salvation

As regards the nature of salvation, the *Kauśitaki* *upaniṣad* holds that it consists in communion (*sāyujya*)⁶⁵. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* tells us that emancipation consists in fellowship with the Deity and in residence in His locality.⁶⁶ The *Bhāgavata* informs that salvation is fivefold :⁶⁷

- (a) residence in the Deity's locality (*Sālokya*),
- (b) possession of lordship equal to that of the Deity (*Sārṣṭi*),
- (c) remaining near the Deity (*Sāmipyā*),
- (d) having a form similar to that of the Deity (*Sūrupya*), and
- (e) one-ness (*Ekatva*).

The second kind of salvation is peculiar to the *Bhāgavata* which also uses the word 'ekatva' instead of 'sāyujya'.

Rāmānuja has not given us any detailed account of the state of salvation. He has simply told us that the emancipated soul gains

admission into the Kingdom of God and thereafter it becomes, as it were, saturated with the ecstasy of Divine communion. Veṅkaṭa nātha, however, holds that sāyujya alone is salvation proper whereas sālokya, sāmipyā and sārupya are obviously subsidiary.⁶⁸ In other words, a soul that attains sāyujya, obviously attains sālokya and sāmipyā also because one cannot be in Divine communion, without being in the locality of the Deity and also being near Him. Again, since a soul in the state of sāyujya possesses the same colour and contour as those of the Deity, the sārupya also must be there.

The Viśiṣṭadvaita conception of sāyujya really means divine communion. The word 'Sāyujya' is an abstract noun derived from 'Sayujau' which occurs in the form of sayujā in the Rgveda 1.164.20.⁶⁹ This Vedic text makes mention of two friendly and fellow birds of beautiful feathers perching on the same tree, meaning thereby the individual soul and God or two individual souls, one in bondage and the other in the state of emancipation. This word in its Vedic usage obviously points to the relation of duality between the two birds. If there can be sāyujya between two friends who are indeed numerically two, the same relation can exist between a devotee and his Deity. The Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā has likewise referred to a brāhmaṇa and a kṣatriya as sayujā.⁷⁰

Śaṅkara has also used the word sāyujya in the sense of fellowship. Commenting on Brahmasūtra 4.4.17,⁷¹ he states that people who enjoy fellowship (sāyujya) with Iṣvara as a result of their devotion to the Lower Brahman do not attain absolute lordship.⁷² Fellowship thus understood by Śaṅkara, cannot have the sense of a devotee's being absorbed into Iṣvara; it only means the individual soul's communion with God—both being numerically distinct. The sumnum bonum of human life, according to Śaṅkara, is the soul's absorption into the Nirguna Brahman. However, Śayujya is generally understood in the sense of absorption of the individual into, or his identity with, the Absolute. But Veṅkaṭanātha objects to such interpretation of the word by observing as follows in his commentary on Tattva-muktā-Kalāpa 2.67: "The word 'sayuk' is not a synonym of one, it has nor been used anywhere in this sense..... If a lexicographer says that sāyujya means oneness, then his interpretation must be ignored as one that is based on prejudice or is due to the lack of intelligence for understanding the etymology of the word."⁷³ Śaṅkara has not, however, used the word in the sense of oneness, but in that of fellowship or communion. In fact,

Śaṅkara's conception of sāyujya with *Iṣvara* (Personal God) agrees with Rāmānuja's conception of salvation.

Nevertheless, there is a fundamental difference between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja with regard to the question of the nature of salvation. For the former, the highest state of salvation is the complete identity of the individual with Brahman (Kaivalya). The latter, though he recognises Kaivalya as we shall see later, in a sense different from that of Śaṅkara, regards sāyujya as the proper salvation.

The individual's fellowship with Saguṇa Brahman, according to Śaṅkara, is only a stepping stone to his absorption into Nirguṇa Brahman. But Rāmānuja, who does not draw a distinction between Nirguṇa and Saguṇa, does not admit salvation in this sense of Śaṅkara. As previously seen, the Brahman is one. It is Nirguṇa inasmuch as It does not possess any of those attributes which properly belong to prakṛti. It is again Saguṇa in the sense that It possesses such attributes as omniscience, bliss, etc. Since the Brahman is thus both Nirguṇa and Saguṇa, the question of the emancipated soul's absorption into Brahman cannot, as Rāmānuja points out, arise. Salvation then, concludes Rāmānuja, is nothing but the individual's eternal fellowship or communion with God. Hence the interpretation of the term 'sāyujya' is in the sense of communion in devotional philosophy.

Kaivalya (Isolation)

Rāmānuja holds that those who know 'the doctrine of the five fires' (pañcāgni-vidyā), like those who follow the path of devotion, attain communion with God. In this connection he seeks to derive support from the scriptures which, according to him, state that those who know the pañcāgni-vidyā travel on the path of Arcis etc., and ultimately realise God so as never to return.⁷⁴ One who knows the 'five fires', knows the real nature of the self. One desirous of knowing the true nature of one's own self is, as Rāmānuja points out, called a *jijñāsu* in the *Gītā*, while one who is devoted to God is called a *jñāni*. The difference between a *jijñāsu* and a *jñāni* is that the former aims at isolation (kaivalya), while the latter does at the realisation of God. But both ultimately become free from metempsychosis. Rāmānuja left no doubt in his mind as to the meaning of kaivalya, but his followers differed among themselves in this respect. According to the Vadagalais, kaivalya is enjoyed somewhere in the material universe, whereas the Tengalais hold that kaivalya is trans-material so that its proper place is in the spiritual

universe. The freed soul of a *jijñāsu* resides, according to the latter, in isolation in a distant part of *Vaikunṭha* just as a woman forsaken by her husband lives away from him.⁷⁵ But the former notes that such a soul continues to reside in isolation somewhere on the material plane.⁷⁶ According to Śrinivāsādāsa, an isolated soul (*kevali*) realises its own self and not God.⁷⁷ As regards the question whether 'isolation' is in material or spiritual world, he mentions both the views without deciding between them. The author of the *Vedāntakārikā* says that the state of *kaivalya* is coveted only by some, and adds that people like him have no liking for it.⁷⁸

The Powers of a Liberated Soul

In the state of transmigration as well as other stages of life the soul's essential qualities such as omniscience etc., are but partially manifest. A piece of diamond fresh from the mine does not appear to be precious, for all its lustre is concealed by its outer coating. It is only after its impurities have been washed away that it shines forthwith in its natural lustre. Similarly, the soul shines in its essential glory only when the impurities of matter accumulating around it are removed. The washing does not create in the gem any lustre that does not already exist in it. The removal of the impurities born of matter, likewise, cannot create consciousness and other qualities in the soul. These qualities are eternally there in it.⁷⁹

The desires of an emancipated soul are fulfilled as a matter of course, and its resolves never fail. But even these powers of such a soul are not unlimited. Absolute power rests with the Almighty alone. Rāmānuja, therefore, holds that a freed soul, though it is endowed with powers such as 'anīmā' (becoming small) and 'mahīmā' (becoming great), cannot create, sustain and destroy the universe.⁸⁰ It is God—and God alone—that is responsible for these activities. However, since an emancipated soul has infallible resolves and rises above the obligations of injunctions and prohibitions in the state of salvation, it is under no one's control and subjugation.⁸¹ As to whether an emancipated soul possesses a body including the sense-organs, Bādari's reply is that it does not, and in support of his view quotes the following: An embodied one cannot be free from pleasure and pain'⁸². But Jaimini contradicts this view and finds support for himself in another scriptural statement to the effect that an emancipated soul becomes one, three, five and seven, which, as he argues, it cannot become unless it assumes bodies including sense-organs.⁸³ Rāmānuja

agrees, on the point with Badarayana who leaves to the soul itself the choice to remain either embodied or otherwise.⁸⁴

The Stuff of the Body in Emancipation

In the state of liberation the individual soul is indeed free from all kinds of bondage. Even the form which it then assumes is not made of matter (prakṛti). The Chāndogya says, 'The emancipated soul, (samprasāda), having approached the highest light (God) manifests in its own form.'⁸⁵ Rāmānuja says that the form assumed by a soul in the state of emancipation is not adventitious.⁸⁶

The life of a mortal creature depends upon a body including the sense-organs and breath; but life on the Divine plane is independent of all these things. The Bhāgavata says that the inhabitants of Vaikuṇṭha are without bodies, sense-organs and breath.⁸⁷ The stuff of which they are made is beyond comprehension. This reminds one of a description of the spirits in Milton's *Paradise Lost* which is as follows :—

"For spirits when they please :
 Can either sex assume, or both ; so soft
 And uncompounded in their essence pure,
 Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumbrous flesh, but, in what shape they choose,
 Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
 Can execute their airy purposes".

(1.423-30)

"All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
 All intellect, all sense ; and as they please
 They limb themselves, and colour, shape or size,
 Assume as like them best, condense or rare".

6. 350—353

A similar idea is also to be found in the *Nirukta*. While classifying the gods under two heads, the action-born and the self-born, Yāska says that the latter are all spirit and that even their paraphernalia is all spirit, the ātman. Their chariots, horses, weapons, and arrows are nothing but the ātman.⁸⁸

A released soul must be in the image of God so far as its form and content are concerned. The *Upaniṣad* reveals, 'The pure soul attains the likeness of God.'⁸⁹

The Kingdom of God

The kingdom of God has various names in devotional philosophy. Being the supreme place, it is called 'Parama Pada,' 'Divya Sthāna' & 'Para Sthāna'. The Rgveda says that there is a flow of sweetness in Viṣṇu's Parama Pada,⁹⁰ which is seen by His devotees.⁹¹ The Kaṭha Upaniṣad likewise points out that a man of religious practice reaches the highest abode of Viṣṇu.⁹² The Brahma-tantra addresses God thus : 'O Lord, the sages know Thy Parama Pada as the primal cause of all effects, the best object of speech and the supreme perfection of the Yogis.'⁹³ The Mahābhārata says that the Divine place is primal, non-aging, un-knowable, difficult to understand and attainable with the help of the Āgamas.⁹⁴ The sages proclaim that it is above the abode of Brahmā. It is all lustre and auspicious. Even the gods cannot see it. The place of Viṣṇu, the Supreme, is more effulgent even than the sun and the fire. It is firm, non-decaying and non-decreasing.⁹⁵ The Viṣṇu-purāṇa says : 'Those who are exclusively devoted to God or always meditate upon Brahman or practise yoga, attain that supreme place which the sages visualize.'⁹⁶ The Gītā tells us that a yogī attains the primal, supreme place and praises it as a place of no disease and a place of eternity.⁹⁷

Being the highest expanse, it is called Parama Vyoma. The Rgveda alludes to God, the Master of this universe, as living in the Parama Vyoma.⁹⁸ The Taittiriya Upaniṣad reveals : 'One who knows Him to be present in the cavity of heart and in the Parama Vyoma enjoys all pleasures in the company of the omniscient Brahman.'⁹⁹

The Vedas proclaim that the universe is but one quarter of God, while the other three quarters are immortal in heaven.¹⁰⁰ This idea later gained wide currency and in consequence, in later devotional literature, there is frequent use of the word 'Tripād-vibhūti' in the sense of Heaven and of the word 'Ekapād-vibhūti' in the sense of the physical universe. Brahma-tantra uses the term 'Mahā-vibhūti' as a synonym for Tripād-vibhūti.¹⁰¹ Being eternal, Tripād-vibhūti is also called Nitya-vibhūti.

The kingdom of God as the abode of Brahman is also called Brahma-loka.¹⁰² The Praśna Upaniṣad says, 'The emancipated souls reach that Brahma-loka which is without rajas.'¹⁰³

The Bhāgavata calls the kingdom of God Vaikuṇṭha.¹⁰⁴ It is described as that which is adored by all and is the residence of 'Śri and Viṣṇu'.¹⁰⁵ It is resplendent, beyond tamas, and there is no apprehension of return from it.¹⁰⁶

Rāmānuja himself assigns several names to the Kingdom of God, such as Brahma-loka, Parama Pada and Vaikuṇṭha. The Acārya must have had deep faith in the existence of the Divine world, as is evident from the Vaikuṇṭha-gadya, where he has given a detailed description of the Divine world in a very beautiful language. He tells us that one has to cross seven strata of the material world in order to reach the Divine Kingdom.¹⁰⁷ He then proceeds to describe the holy Kingdom as full of mansions of superb excellence, orchards laden with fragrance of the flora, chirping birds and frisking fauna, and aromatic pools overgrown with lotuses. In such a Kingdom which surpasses all description stands the Divine Sanctuary, where on a splendid throne called the *Yoga-paryāṅka* reposes the Sanctum sanctorium, God Viṣṇu with all his glory, showering upon the devotees attending upon Him soft, soothing glances and entertaining them with amiable, ambrosial talk.¹⁰⁸ The description is indeed such that one who reads it cannot fail to be infused with a feeling of sanctity. However, in writing out his own description of the Kingdom of God, Rāmānuja might have had before his mind the lucid description of Vaikuṇṭha in the Bhāgavata,¹⁰⁹ and the brief description of Brahma-loka in the Kauśitaki.¹¹⁰ In this matter, he perhaps made the best use of what he could gather from the Upaniṣads and the purāṇas and also availed himself of the description of natural scenery in the Rāmāyaṇa. That he was much impressed by Valmiki's poetic description of Pampā etc. is clear from the fact that a few of the phrases used by him bear close resemblance with those of Valmiki¹¹¹.

The divine throne characterised as Amitaujas (infinitely strong) in the Kauśitaki is sometimes called the 'adorable seat',¹¹² and sometimes the 'Śeṣa-couch'¹¹³ in the Bhāgavata. Rāmānuja has in this connection used Ananta as a synonym for 'Śeṣa' in his Vaikuṇṭha-gadya.¹¹⁴

Rāmānuja says that the Deity is attended upon by celestial persons, and His form is decorated by ornaments of various colours and shapes. Similarly, the Divine weapons such as the disc and the mace also attend upon Him in their personal aspect, according to the Bhāgavata¹¹⁵ and the Rāmāyaṇa.¹¹⁶ They are all Divine beings (brahma maya). Garuḍa and Dūruka, the driver of the Divine coach with Saivya, Sugrīva, Meghapaṇḍa and Balāhaka, also remain in God's service. The principal attendants of the Deity are said to be sixteen in number. These probably symbolise the sixteen thousand devotional songs of the Vedas. The attendants resemble the Deity

in colour and contour but differ from Him in that they do not possess the Kaustubha gem and the Śrī-vatsa mark.¹¹⁷ They are : 1. Viṣvak-sena, 2. Nanda, 3. Sunanda, 4. Bhadra, 5. Subhadra, 6. Jaya, 7. Vijaya, 8. Caṇḍa, 9. Pracāṇḍa, 10. Bala, 11. Prabala, 12. Kumuda, 13. Kumudakṣa, 14. Sila, 15. Suśila, and 16. Suṣena. These are the eternal souls technically characterised as 'suri' or 'nitya'. Apart from them, all the emancipated souls (mukta-jivas) are the inhabitants of the Kingdom of God.

The Divine Kingdom is immune from the vicissitudes of creation and destruction.¹¹⁸ The Chāndogya says that the Brahma-loka is uncreated.¹¹⁹ Rāmānuja expounds the word 'Brahma-loka' as an appositional compound (Karmadhāraya), suggesting thereby a relation of identity between God and His Kingdom.¹²⁰ The Bhāgavata also equates the loka with Brahma, both thus being of the nature of eternity, truth, knowledge, light and infinitude.¹²¹ The Itihāsasamuccaya also holds the same view.¹²²

As to the stuff of which the Kingdom of God is made, Rāmānuja holds that it is non-material (aprakṛta), and accepts the Rgvedic view that it is beyond rajas. Since the three constituents of prakṛti viz sattva, rajas and tamas, cannot exist in isolation from one another, the word rajas occurring in the Rgvedic view, argues Rāmānuja, is a synecdoche for matter (prakṛti) as a whole. He, therefore, concludes that God lives in a place which is beyond the material world.¹²³ According to the Abirbudhnya Saṃhitā, the Divine world is of the nature of knowledge and bliss.¹²⁴ The Brhma-tantra ascribes six Divine attributes to Vaikuṇṭha, while denying the existence of the elements of matter in it.¹²⁵

The later followers of Vaiṣṇavasim, however, hold different views about the nature of the stuff of which Vaikuṇṭha is made. Although they agree that it is made of Śuddha-sattva, yet they differ as to whether it is inert (jeda) or non-inert (ajeda). Some of them regard it as inert, some say that it is really inert but figuratively non-inert, and again there are still others such as Venkaṭanātha who regard it as non-inert,¹²⁶ by stating that self-luminosity in its case as in that of the ātman, is, really and not merely figuratively, an essential quality.

Śaṅkara speaks of special abodes of God,¹²⁷ and points out that God as a person sits on a throne¹²⁸ in the city of Aparājīta in Brahma-loka.¹²⁹ But all these things—the world, the city, the throne, the Divine from—are, in his view, made of māyā and hence not ultimately real. Śaṅkara, therefore, holds that the worship of a personal

God can produce no better result than what would follow from the attainment of paradise or svarga.¹³⁰ But the Vaiṣṇava teachers maintain that all the paraphernalia belonging to God are super-natural (aprakṛta) and are of the highest significance to those who aspire after higher life.

No Fear of Fall from the Heaven of Viṣṇu

Once the individual soul attains emancipation and reaches the Kingdom of God, there is no fear of his return to this world. The emancipated soul looks upon God as his all, and, in fact, is in possession of Him. Nothing else than God does he want any more. God also loves beyond measure the soul that has given up pleasures of the world and taken to the path of devotion. God shall not part, Rāmānuja says, with a dear one whom He Himself considers to be rare. The chāndogya says, 'Those who travel on the path of the gods, the path of Brahman, do not return to this world.'¹³¹ The Brhadāraṇyaka also says the same thing.¹³² The Gītā re-iterates, 'Having reached me, the great souls do not get into transmigration in the world which is non-eternal and full of miseries.'¹³³ Bādarāyaṇa's concluding aphorism runs thus: 'No return, the scriptures say so.'¹³⁴

In this connection mention may be made of a gnomic legend contained in the Mahābhārata.¹³⁵ Mudgala, a hermit of Kurukṣetra, had a wife and a son; and they all used to pick the grains left over by the shopkeepers on the ground (Śila) and by the farmers on the field (uñcha). The gleanings used to last for a fortnight, and a part of them used to be offered to the gods, and the remainder used to be at the disposal of the family. But the members of the family used to partake of the latter only once a fortnight, serving to the guests whatever was left. Their heart was so pure and their austerity so severe that Indra used to come in person every fortnight to accept his share of the oblation, and a host of guests used to pour into the hermitage for food. But the sincerity of the hermit wrought miracles. His stock of food never fell short. Once the haughty sage, Durvāsā, wanted to test Mudgala's patience. He came and begged for food. Mudgala offered the sage whatever he had. Durvāsā consumed as much of the stock as he could, besmeared his naked body with the rest and then went away. The result was that there was no food left for Mudgala. But he did not lose patience. Durvāsā repeated the test six times; but finding the hermit always patient and serene, he appreciated his unflinching charity.

When Durvāsā was praising Mudgala's equanimity of mind and the excellence of his character, a celestial being descended and offered Mudgala a lift in his plane for going to Indra's paradise in recognition of his meritorious deeds. The hermit then asked the celestial messenger to describe the joys of paradise. The latter described the various pleasures of paradise and pointed out that inhabitants of Indra's domain are not born of parents, nor do they perspire etc., nor do their garments become dirty, nor again do the flowers in their garlands wither.¹³⁶ But, he continued, the joyful life that is enjoyed there is bound to come to an end. Some day or the other one must return from the paradise, the world of pleasures, to this world of action, and the time for one's return is indicated by the withering of the flowers in one's garland. At that time one loses his consciousness and falls, the messenger concluded.

The thought of return and the termination of celestial pleasures left Mudgala dissatisfied. He then asked the messenger to inform him of a place from where there is no return. The celestial visitor replied that such a place is the abode of Viṣṇu, lying beyond the paradise of Brahmā.¹³⁷ It is pure and effulgent, and is known as para-Brahman. Those engrossed in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures cannot go there. Those who are addicted to avarice, wrath, infatuation, fraud and enmity are equally out of place there. Only they can go there who are free from the faults of egoism, exercise control over their senses, and practise meditation. Thereupon Mudgala, as the story goes, gave up the idea of visiting paradise, and resorted to renunciation and meditation.

The legend teaches that there is no fear of fall from the heaven of Viṣṇu, the Supreme Being, as there is from the paradise of the gods. In acceptance of this teaching, Rāmānuja believed in the eternal Heaven in preference to the temporal paradise. The paradise of the gods is subject to the mutations of time, having a beginning and an end; but not so the Kingdom of God, where time is powerless.¹³⁸

The above legend, in fact, teaches what is taught in the Gītā. The Gītā says that after having enjoyed the pleasures of svarga, the gods enter, when their merits get exhausted, into the world of the mortals.¹³⁹ To those, on the other hand, Rāmānuja says, who devoutly contemplate God, He offers not only His fellowship (Yoga), but also gives assurance of non-return from His Kingdom (Kṣema)*.

*Yoga is 'the attainment of the unattained', and kṣema is 'the preservation of the attained'. Rāmānuja's interpretation of the passage of the Gītā suits the devotional view and the way the Ācārya puts it in support of the doctrine of non-return from the Divine place, is most fascinating.

God indeed secures a divine life for a true devotee and also perpetuates His communion with him.¹⁴⁰

References

1. विद्याकामस्तु गिरिं दाम्पत्यां उमां सतीम् । (भागवतम् २, ३, ७)
2. अकामः सर्वकामो वा मोक्षकाम उदारधीः
तीव्रे रुद्धि भक्तियोगेन यजेत् पुरुषं परम् ॥ (भागवतम् २, ३, १०)
3. दिवो वा विष्णु उत वा पृथिव्याः
महो वा विष्णु उरोरन्तरिक्षात् ।
उभा हि हस्ता वसुना पृणस्वा
प्रयच्छ दक्षिणादोत् सव्यात् ॥ (यजुर्वेद ५, १६)
4. सरसिजनिलये सरोजहस्ते ध्वलतरांशुक-गन्धमाल्यशोभे ।
भगवति हरि-वल्लभे मनोजे त्रिभुवनभूतिकरि प्रसीद महाम् ।
***धनं धान्यं पशुं वृष्टपुत्रलाभं जातसम्बत्सरं दीर्घमायुः । (श्रीसूक्तम्)
5. आर्तो जिज्ञासुरवर्यर्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्थंभ । (गीता ७-१६)
6. आर्तः प्रतिष्ठाहीनो ध्रष्टवर्यः पुनस्तप्राप्तिकामः, अर्थर्थी अप्राप्तैश्वर्यंतया
ऐश्वर्यंकामः तयोर्मुखभेदमात्रम्, ऐश्वर्यंविषयतया ऐक्यात् एक एवाधिकारः ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ७, १६).
7. प्रकृतिवियुक्तात्मस्वरूपावाप्तीच्छु ज्ञानमेवास्य स्वरूपमिति जिज्ञासुरित्युक्तम् ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ७, १६)
8. शस्त्राम्न्यम्बुद्धायवः छेदनदहनक्लेदनशोषणानि आत्मानं प्रतिकर्तुं न शब्दनुवन्ति
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् २, २४)
9. एवं भगवतः सर्वेश्वरादात्मनां परस्परं च भेदः पारमार्थिक इति भगवत्तेवोक्तम् ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् २, १२)
10. न ह्यात्मा प्रमेयतयोपलभ्यतेऽपि तु प्रमातृतया (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् २, १८)
11. सर्वत्रगं व्योमवद् व्यापि (गीतायां शंकरभाष्यम् १२, ३)
12. मयि विश्वरूपे परमेश्वरे आवेश्य समाधाय मनो ये भवताः सन्त इत्यादि ।
(गीतायां शंकरभाष्यम् १२, २)
13. ये त्वक्षरं प्रत्यगात्मस्वरूपम् । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १२, २)
14. (अ) नित्ययोगं कांक्षमाणा ये मामुपासते (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १२, २)
(आ) ये भक्तास्त्वां सकलविभूतियुक्तं परिपूर्णमुपासते ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १२, ३)
15. सर्वत्र देवादिदेहेषु वर्तमानमपि । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १२, ३)
16. सर्वगत्वादात्मनः सर्वतत्त्वव्यापकस्वभावतया (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् २, २४)

17. सर्वेभ्यस्तत्त्वेभ्यः सूक्ष्मत्वादस्य तैव्याप्त्यनहंत्वाद् व्याप्त्य-कर्तव्याच्च छेदन-दहन-क्लेदन-शोषणानाम् । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् २, २४)
18. द्वाविमो पुरुषो लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च । (गीता १५, १६)
19. तत्र क्षरशब्दनिर्दिष्टः पुरुषो जीवशब्दभिलपनीय-ब्रह्मादि-स्तम्ब-पर्यन्तं क्षरण-स्वभावाऽचित्संसृष्ट-सर्वभूतानि (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १५, १६)
20. अक्षरशब्दनिर्दिष्टः कूटस्थोऽचित्संसर्गवियुक्तः स्वेत रूपेणावस्थितो मुक्तात्मा । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १५, १६)
21. लोक्यत इति लोकः । तत्वयं लोकत्रयम् । अचेतनम्, तत्संसृष्टचेतनो, मुक्तश्चेति प्रमाणावगम्यम् एतत् त्रयम् । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १५, १७)
22. आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरार्थात्तिनोऽज्ञुन । (गीता ८, १६)
23. मां सर्वज्ञं...परमकारुणिकं सदैकल्पयम् प्राप्तानां विनाशप्रसंगाभावात्तेषां पुनर्जन्मन न विद्यते । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ८, १६)
24. तदैवं परब्रह्मविदो गन्तव्यादिविज्ञानस्य बाधितत्वान्तं कथंचन गतिरुपपादितुं शक्या । (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् ४, ३, १४)
25. कायंब्रह्मात्मोक्त-प्रलय-प्रत्युपस्थाने सति तत्रैवोत्पन्न-सम्यग्दर्शनाः सन्तस्तदध्यक्षेण हिरण्यगम्भेण सहातः परं परिशुद्धं विष्णोः परमं पदं प्रतिपद्धते । (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् ४, ३, १०)
26. यथा पुष्कर-पलाश आपो न शिलध्यन्ते (द्वान्दोग्य ४, १४, ३)
27. यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो ब्रुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते हस्तापि स इमाल्लोकान्तं हन्ति न निवद्यते । (गीता १८, १७)
28. (ग्र) विद्याप्राप्तौ पुरुषस्य विद्याया माहात्म्यादुत्तररूपविद्योरश्लेषविनाशानुपपद्यते (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, १, १३)
(ग्रा) इतरस्य पुण्यस्याव्येवमेव न्यायेनाश्लेषविनाशौ विद्याया स्याताम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, १, १४)
29. भोगेनैव भ्रष्टिव्यत्वादारब्धफलयोः कर्मणोः । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, १, १६)
30. सांपराये देहात्क्रमण-काल एव विदुपः सुकृतदुष्कृते निरवशेषं हीयते । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३, ३, २७)
31. अश्व इव रोमाणिं विघूय पापम् (द्वान्दोग्य ८, १३, १)
32. तत् सुकृतदुष्कृते विघूनुते तस्य प्रिया जातयः सुकृतमूपयन्त्यप्रिया दुष्कृतम् । (कौषीतकी १, ४)
33. तदोकोऽप्रज्ञवलनं तत्प्रकाशितद्वारो विद्यासामर्थ्यात्तच्छ्रेष्ठ-गत्यनुस्मृति-योगाच्च हार्दनुगृहीतः शताधिकया । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ४, २, १६)
34. यातिवाहिकास्तलिलगात् । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ४, ३, ४)
35. (ग्र) अचिरात्यभिमानिनश्चेतना देवताविशेषा अतियात्रायां नियुक्ता इति गम्यते । (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् ४, ३, ५)
(ग्रा) वदन्ति चार्चिरादयः शब्दा अचिरात्यात्मभूतानभिमानिदेवताविशेषान् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ३, ५)

36. मुक्तोर्विदिन-यूर्वपक्ष-पुदुद्मासावद-वातांशुमद्-
ग्लो-विद्युद-वरणेन्द्र-वातु-महितः (सत्संगात्पद्यम्)

37. वरुणस्तावद् विद्युत उपरिष्टानिवेशयितव्यः । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ३, ३)

38. (अ) वरुणादुपरि इन्द्रादि निवेशयितव्यः । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ३, ३)
(आ) स इन्द्रलोकं स प्रजापतिलोकं स ब्रह्मलोकम् । (कौपीतकी १, ३)

39. प्रधान-परमव्योम्नोरन्तरे विरजा नदी । (पादोत्तरखण्डे)

40. इयं वृद्धिज्ञनेन्द्रियैः सहिता विज्ञानमय-कोशो भवति । मनस्तु ज्ञानेन्द्रियैः सहितं सन्मनोमयकोशो भवति । इदं प्राणादि पञ्चकं कमेन्द्रियैः सहितं सत् प्राणमयकोशो भवति । एतत् कौशत्रयं मिलितं सत् सूक्ष्मशरीरमित्युच्यते । (सदानन्दकृत-वेदान्तसारः ७२-८६)

41. (अ) महदहङ्कारकादेशेन्द्रियपञ्चतन्मात्रपर्यन्तम्, एषां समुदायः सूक्ष्मशरीरम् (चत्वारिंशत्म-सांख्यकारिकायां तत्त्वकीमुदी)

42. तत्पुरुषोऽमानवः । (छान्दोग्य ४, १५, ५)

43. विना श्रीवत्सकौस्तुभौ । (भागवतम् ६, ६, २६)

44. अम्बावश्चाम्बायवश्च (कौपीतकी १, २)

45. स आगच्छब्द्यमितीजसं पर्यक्षम् । (कौपीतकी १, ५)

46. वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः । (गीता ७, १६)

47. परं ब्रह्म वासुदेवाश्चं सूक्ष्मं प्राप्यते । (श्रीभाष्यम् २, २, ४१)

48. तत् कर्तृत्वमस्य परात् परमात्मन एव हेतोर्भवति । (२, ३, ४० तमे ब्रह्मसूत्रे श्रीभाष्यम्)

49. पाटलिपुत्रात् काशीमपेक्ष्य प्रयागः परः । (न्यायसिद्धान्त-मुक्तावली)

50. अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्त्रतः । (गीता ४, ४)

51. आत्मनः प्रतिकूलानि परेषां न समाचरेत् । (सुभाषितम्)

52. शुद्धं हृदयदोर्बैल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप । (गीता २, ३)

53. परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् । (गीता १०, १२)

54. (ष) परमाणोति पूरुषः । (गीता ३, १६)
(आ) आत्मानं प्राणोतीति रामानुजभाष्यम् ।

55. निजेन तस्य मानेन चायुर्वर्येशतं नृणाम् ।
तत्पराश्चं तदर्थं च परार्थमभिधीयते । (कूर्मपुराणम् शब्दार्थचिन्तामणी उद्भूतम्)

56. विदितो भगवान् साक्षात् पुरुषः प्रकृतेः परः । (भागवतम् १०, ३, १३)

57. परात् तच्छ्रुतेः (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् २, ३, ४०)

58. स्तु ज्ञाद् वाराणसी परा

59. सामान्यं द्विविधं प्रोक्तं परं चापरमेव च (भाषापरिच्छेदः ८)
परत्वमधिक-देशवृत्तित्वम् । सकल जात्यपेक्षयाऽधिकदेश-वृत्तित्वात् सत्तायाः परत्वम् । (मुक्तावली)

60. पृष्ठ पालन पूरणयोः (जुहोत्यादिगणीयः)
पृष्ठ पालन पूरणयोः (क्रषादिन्गणीयः)

पूरणे (चुरादि-गणीयः)

61. (अ) परात् तच्छ्रुतेः (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् २, ३, ४०)

(आ) पराभिध्यानात् (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ३, २, ४)

62. परो व्यूहश्च विभवो नियन्ता सवंदेहिनाम् । (विष्वक्सेन-संहिता)

(यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका-टीकायामुद्वृता)

63. भवतु मम परस्मिन् वेमुपी भक्तिरूपा । (श्रीभाष्यमंगलम्)

64. (अ) तत्कर्तृत्वमस्य परात् परमात्मन एव हेतोऽतोभवति । (श्रीभाष्यम् २, ३, ४०)

(आ) पराभिध्यानात् परमपुरुषसंकल्पात् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ३, २, ४)

65. सायुज्यं संस्थानम् । (कौशितकी १, ३)

66. एतस्यै देवतायै सायुज्यं सलोकतां जयति । (दृढारण्यक १, ५, २३)

67. सालोक्य-सार्ग्यं सामीप्य-सारूप्यैकत्वमप्युत । (भागवतम् ३, २६, १३)

68. सालोक्यादि-प्रभेदा ननु परिपठिताः क्वापि मोक्षस्य मैवं, सायुज्यस्यैव तत्त्वात् तदितरविषये मुक्तिशब्दस्तु भास्तः । (तत्त्वमुक्ताकलापः २, ६७)

69. द्वा सुपर्णा संयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिपस्वजाते । (ऋग्वेदः १, १६४, २०)

70. ब्रह्म चैव च क्षत्रं च संयुजा अकः । (मंत्रायणीसंहिता)

71. जगद्व्यापारवर्जं प्रकरणादसन्निहितत्वाच्च । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ४, ४, १७)

72. ये सगुण-ब्रह्मोपासनात् सहैव मनसेश्वरसायुज्यं ब्रजन्ति जगदुत्पत्त्यादि-व्यापारं वर्जयित्वा न्यदिग्गिमाद्यात्मकमैश्वर्यं मुक्तानां भवितुमहंति । (शांकरभाष्यम् ४, ४, १७)

73. नहि सयुक्तशब्द एकपर्यायस्तथा क्वचिदपि प्रयोगाभावात्... । यदि किञ्चन्नै-घण्टुक ऐक्यं सायुज्यमिति पठेत् तत् तस्य स्वपक्षाभिनिवेशेन शब्दशक्तिप्रहणापरिबुद्धतया वा प्रयुक्तमित्युपेक्षणीयम् । (सर्वार्थसिद्धिः २, ६७)

74. (अ) पंचान्विदोऽव्यचिरादिना गतिश्वरणात् अचिरादिना गतस्य ब्रह्मप्राप्त्य-पुनरावृत्तिश्वरणाच्च । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ३, १४)

(आ) परं ब्रह्म उपासीनानामात्मानं च प्रकृतिवियुक्तं ब्रह्मात्मकमुपासीनानामचिरादिना मार्गेण अपुनरावृत्तिलक्षणा गतिरुक्ता । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ४, १)

(इ) ज्ञानिनः कैवल्यार्थिनश्चापुनरावृत्तिम् । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ८, १५)

(ई) आत्मयाद्यात्मविदः परमपुरुषनिष्ठस्य च साधारणीमचिरादिकां गतिमाह, द्वयोरप्यचिरादिका गतिः श्रुतो श्रुता सा चापुनरावृत्तिलक्षणा । (गीताभाष्ये रामानुजः ८, २३)

(उ) अपि तु परं ब्रह्मोपासीनान् आत्मानं च प्रकृतिवियुक्तं ब्रह्मात्मकं चोपासीनान् आतिवाहिको गणो नयतीति सिद्धम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ३, १५)

75. प्रकृतेस्तु वियुक्तस्य स्वात्मनोऽनुभवः परम् । कैवल्यमर्चिर्मार्गेण गत्वापि परमं पदम् ॥ रमण्यत्वतपत्नीवद् क्वचित् कोणोऽवतिष्ठति (वेदान्तकारिकावली ८, ५५-५६)

76. केचित्प्रकृतिमण्डल एव क्वचिद् देशे स्वात्मागुभव इत्याहुः । (यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका)

77. कैवल्यं नाम ज्ञानयोगात् प्रकृतिवियुक्तस्वात्मानुभवस्पोऽनुभवः भगवदनुभव-
व्यतिरिक्त-स्वात्मानुभव इत्याहुः (यतीन्द्रमतपीपिका)

78. कैवल्यमेतत् केषांचिदार्थाणामेव सम्मतम् ।
अस्मदाद्यास्तु कैवल्यं त मन्यन्त इति स्फुटम् ॥
(वेदान्तकारिकावली ८, ५७)

79. अतः प्रत्यगात्मनोऽपहनपाप्मत्वादयः स्वाभाविका गुणाः परं ज्योतिरुपसम्पन्न-
स्याविभवन्ति, तोत्पद्यते; यथोक्तं भगवता शौनकेनापि—
यथा त्रियते ज्ञोत्सना मलप्रकालनान्मणेः ।
दोषप्रहारणान्न ज्ञानमात्मनः क्रियते तथा ॥ (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ४, ३)

80. जगद्-व्यापारो निखिल-चेतना चेतन स्वरूपस्थिति प्रवृत्तिभेदनियमनम्, तदृजं
निरस्त-निखिलतिरोधानस्य निव्यर्ज-ब्रह्मानुभवस्य मुक्तस्यैवयंम् ।
(श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ४, १७)

81. अतः सत्यसंकल्पत्व-श्रूत्यैवानन्याधिपतित्वं च सिद्धम् । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ४, ६)

82. (ग्र) अभावं बादरिग्राह ह्येवम् । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ४, ४, १०)
(ग्रा) न ह वै सशरीरस्य सतः प्रियाप्रिययोरपहतिरस्ति अशरीरं वा वसन्ते न
प्रियाप्रिये स्पृशतः । (छान्दोग्य ८, १२, १)

83. (ग्र) भावं जैमिनिविकल्पामननात् । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ४, ४, ११)
(ग्रा) स एकधा भवति त्रिधा भवति पंचधा भवति सप्तधा ।
(छान्दोग्य ७, २६, २)

84. (ग्र) द्वादशाहवदुभयविधं बादरायणोऽजः । (ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ४, ४, १२)
(ग्रा) अत एव संकल्पादुभयविधं सशरीरमशरीरं च मुक्तं भगवान् बादरायणो
मन्यते । एवं चोभयी श्रुतिरूपपद्यते । (श्रीभाष्यम्)

85. एष सम्प्रसादोऽस्माच्चरीरात्समुत्थाय परं ज्योतिरुपसंपद्य स्वेन रूपेणाभिनिष्पद्यते ।
(छान्दोग्य ८, १२, ३)

86. आगन्तुक-देह-परिग्रहे हि स्वेन रूपेणोति विशेषणामनर्थकं स्यात्
(श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ४, १)

87. देहेन्द्रियाऽमु-हीनानां वैकुण्ठ-पुरवासिनाम् । (भागवतम् ७, १, ३४)

88. आत्मैवेषां रथो भवत्यात्मादव आत्मायुधमात्मैव आत्मा सर्वे देवस्य ।
(निष्ठके देवतकाण्डम् १, १, ४)

89. निरंजनः परमं साम्यमुपैति । (मुण्डकोपनियद् ३, १, ३)

90. विष्णोः पदे परमे मध्व उत्सः । (ऋग्वेदः १, १५४, ४)

91. तद् विष्णोः परमं पदं सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः । (ऋग्वेदः १, २२, २०)

92. स तु तद् पदमाप्नोति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् । (कठोपनियद् १, ३, ६)

93. कार्याणां कारणं पूर्वं वचसां वाच्यमुत्तमम् ।
योगिनां परमां सिद्धिं परमं ते पदं विदुः । (ब्रह्मतन्त्रे जितन्त्रेस्तोत्रम्)

94. दिव्यं स्थानमजरं चाप्रमेयं दुर्विज्ञेयं चागमैर्गम्यमाचम्
(वेदार्थसंग्रहे उद्धृतं महाभारतवचनम्)

95. ब्रह्मणः सदनाद्वच्वं परं स्थानं प्रचक्षते ।
अत्यर्कानिलदीप्तं तत् स्थानं विद्धणोमंहात्मनः ।
स्थानमेतन्महाभाग ध्रुवमक्षयमव्ययम्
(महाभारतम्)

96. एकान्तिनः सदा ब्रह्म-ध्यायिनो योगिनो हि ये ।
तेषां तत् परमं स्थानं यद्वै पश्यति सूरयः ॥
(विष्णुपुराणम्)

97. योगी परं स्थानमुर्पैति चाचम् ।
पदं गच्छस्त्यनामयम् ।
शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम्
(गीता २, ५१)

98. यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन् ।
(ऋग्वेदः १०, १२६, ७)

99. यो वेद निहितं गुह्यायां परमे व्योमन् ।
सोश्नुते सर्वानु कामान् सह ब्रह्मणा विपश्चिता । (तैत्तीरीय २, १, १)

100. पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि । (ऋग्वेदः १०, ६०, ३)

101. महाविभूति-संस्थाय नमस्ते पुरुषोत्तम (ब्रह्मतन्त्रान्तर्गतं जितन्ते स्तोत्रम्)

102. पुरुषोमानस एव ब्रह्मलोकान् गमयति । (बृहदा० ६, २, १५)

103. तेषामसी विरजो ब्रह्मलोकः ।
(प्रद्वनोपनिषद् १, १६)

104. युवर्वकुण्ठ-निलयम् ।
(भागवतम् ३, १५, १३)

105. (अ) सर्वलोक-नमस्कृतम् ।
(आ) वैकुण्ठास्यं यदव्यास्ते थीनिवासः श्रिया सह
(भागवतम् ६, ४, ६०)

106. (अ) ततो वैकुण्ठमगमद् भास्वरं तमसः परम् । (भागवतम् १०, ८८, २५)
(आ) यत्र नारायणः साक्षान्न्यासिनां परमा गतिः ।

शान्तानां न्यस्तदण्डानां यतो नावर्तते गतः (भागवतम् १०, ८८, २६)

107. चतुर्दशभुवनात्मकमण्ड दशमगुणितोत्तरं चावरण्यस्प्तकं समस्तकार्यकारणाजात-
मतीत्य ।
(वैकुण्ठगच्छम्)

108. दिव्यामल-कोमलावलोकनेन विश्वमाल्लादयगतं दिव्यलीलालापामृतरसेन
अखिलजन-हृदयान्तराण्यापूरयन्तं भगवन्तं नारायणं ।
(वैकुण्ठगच्छम्)

109. (अ) तस्मै स्वलोकं भगवान् सभाजितः
सन्दर्शयामास परं न यत्परम् इत्यादि ।
(भागवतम् २, ६, ६)

(प्रा) त एकदा भगवतो वैकुण्ठस्यामलात्मनः
ययुवर्वकुण्ठनिलयं सर्वलोकनमस्कृतम् ।
यत्र चादा: पुमानास्ते भगवान् शब्दगोचरः इत्यादि ।
(भागवतम् ३, १५, १३)

110. तस्य ह वा एतस्य ब्रह्मलोकस्यारो हृद इत्यादि ।
(कीर्णीतकी १, ३)

111. (अ) पतितैः पतमानैश्च पादपस्थैश्च मारुतः ।
कुसुमैः पश्य सौमित्रे क्रीडनिव समन्ततः । (रामायणम् ४, १, १३)
परितः पतितैः पतमानैः पादपस्थैश्च नानागन्धवर्गैः दिव्यैः पुष्पैः ।
(वैकुण्ठ-गच्छम्)

(इ) वर्द्धिणोदपुष्ट-नादिताम् । (रामायणम् ३, ७५, २१)
 शुक्रसारिकामयूरकोकिलादिभिः कोमल-कूजितैः । (वैकुण्ठगद्यम्)

112. अध्यहंशीयासनमास्थितं परं वृतं चतुर्षोडश-पंचशक्तिभिः ।
 युक्तं भग्नः स्वैरितरत्र चाध्रुवैः स्व एव धामन् रममाण्मीश्वरम् । (भागवतम् २, ६, १६)

113. मृणालग्नीरायतशेषभोग-पर्यंक एकं पुरुषं शयानम् । (भागवतम् ३, ८, २३)

114. दिव्यपुष्ट-संवयविचित्रे महति दिव्ययोगपर्यके अनन्तभोगिनि (वैकुण्ठगद्यम्)

115. सुनन्दनन्द-प्रमुखैः स्वपार्षदेशकादिभिर्मूर्तिष्ठरैर्निजायुधैः । (वैकुण्ठगद्यम्)
 (ग्रा) अरविन्दोत्पलवतीं पचसौगन्धिकायुताम् । (रामायणम् ३, ७५, २१)
 दिव्य-सौगन्धिक-वापीशतसहस्रैः । (वैकुण्ठगद्यम्)
 पुष्टधा त्रिया कीर्त्यंजयाऽस्तिर्द्विभिन्नेव्यमाणं परमेष्ठिनां पतिम् ॥
 (भागवतम् १०, ८६, ५७)

116. शरा नानाविधादचापि धनुरायत-विग्रहम् ।
 अन्वयगच्छन्त काकुत्स्थं सर्वे पुरुषविग्रहाः । (रामायणम् ७, १०६, ७)

117. प्रतीच्यां दिव्यभूदाविः शंखचक्रगदाधरः ।
 आत्मतुल्यैः योडशभि विना श्रीवत्सकौस्तुभौ ।
 पर्युपसितमुन्निद्र-शरदम्बुहृदेक्षराणम् । (भागवतम् ६, ६, २८)

118. स याति विष्णुलोकं वै दाहप्रलय-वज्रितम् । (स्कन्दपुराणम्)

119. धूत्वा शरीर मकृतं कृतात्मा
 ब्रह्मलोकमभिसम्भवामि । (छान्दोग्यम् ८, १३, १)

120. निपाद-स्थपतिन्यायेन ब्रह्मैव लोको ब्रह्मलोक इति कर्मधारयस्यैव युक्तत्वात्
 (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ३, ११)

121. इति संचित्य भगवान् महाकारणिको हरिः
 दर्शयामास लोकं स्वं गोपानां तमसः परम् ।
 सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं यद् ब्रह्म ज्योतिः सनातनम्
 यदि पश्यन्ति मुनयो गुणापाये समाहिताः । (भागवतम् १०, २८, १४)

122. ब्रह्मणः सदनादूर्ध्वं तद् विष्णोः परमं पदम् ।
 शुद्धं सनातनं ज्योतिः परं ब्रह्मेति यद् विदुः । (इतिहाससमुच्चयः)

123. क्षयनन्तमस्य रजसः पराके । (क्रह्मवेदः ७, १००, ५)
 इति रजशशब्देन त्रिगुणात्मिका प्रकृतिरुच्यते केवलस्य रजसोऽनवस्थानात् । इमां
 त्रिगुणात्मिकां प्रकृतिमतिक्रम्य स्थिते स्थाने क्षयनन्तं वसन्तम् इत्यर्थः । अनेन
 त्रिगुणात्मकात् क्षेत्रजस्य भोग्यभूताद् वस्तुनः परस्ताद् विष्णोवासिस्थानमिति
 गम्यते । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् २३६)

124. ज्ञानानन्दमयी स्त्याना देशभावं व्रजत्युत ।
 स देवा: परमं व्योम निर्मलं पुरुषात्परम् (अहिवृद्ध्यसंहिता ६, २२)

125. लोकं वैकुण्ठं नामानं दिव्यं पादगुण्यसंयुतम् ।
श्वेतानामप्राप्यं गुणत्रयं विवर्जितम् ।
(ब्रह्मतन्त्रान्तर्गतं जितन्ते स्तोत्रम्)

126. श्रीवैकुण्ठमुपेत्य नित्यमज्ञं तस्मिन् परब्रह्मणः ।
सायुज्यं समवाप्य नन्दति समं तेनैव धन्यः पुमान् । (सत्संगात्पद्मद्वयम्)

127. आधिकृतिको यः सवितृष्टिलादिपु विशेषायतनेद्ववस्थितः पर ईश्वरः ।
(ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् ४, ४, १६)

128. पर्यंकस्थं ब्रह्म ।
(ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् ३, ३, २७)

129. ब्रह्मलोके तु तीयस्यामितो दिविः... अपराजिता पूः ।
(ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् ३, ३, २७)

130. सगुणविद्या-विपाकावस्थानं त्वेतत् स्वर्गादिवदवस्थान्तरं यत्रैतदैश्वर्यमुपवर्णते ।
(ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् ४, ४, १६)

131. स एनान् ब्रह्म गमयत्येष देवपथो ब्रह्मपथ एतेन प्रतिपद्यमाना इमं मानवमावर्त्तं नावर्त्तते ।
(द्वान्दोग्य ४, १५, ६)

132. तेषु ब्रह्मलोकेषु पराः पराबतो वसन्ति तेषां न पुनरावृत्तिः ।
(ब्रह्मरण्यक ६, २, १५)

133. मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।
नात्मुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ।
(गीता ८, १५)

134. अनावृतिः शब्दात् ।
(ब्रह्मसूत्रम् ४, ४, २२)

135. महाभारतम्, वनपर्वणि अध्यायाः २६०-२६२.

136. (अ) अस्त्वानलग्नजोहीनान् ।
(ग्रा) न स्वापन्ति वज्रस्तेषां दिव्यगन्धा भनोरमा ।
(महाभारतम् ३, २६३, १६)

137. ब्रह्मणः सदनाद्वर्चं तद् विष्णुः परमं पदम् ।
शुद्धं सनातनं ज्योतिः परं ब्रह्मेति यद् विदुः ॥
न तत्र विप्र गच्छन्ति पुरुषा विषयात्मकाः ।
दम्भलोभ-महाक्रोध-मोहद्वै ह रभिद्रुताः ॥
निमंमा निरहंकारा निर्दुन्दाः संयतेन्द्रियाः ।
ध्यानयोग-पराइचैव तत्र गच्छन्ति मानवाः ।
(महाभारतम् ३, २६३, ३८-४०)

138. (अ) कालः सम्पन्नते तत्र न कालस्तत्र वै प्रभुः ।
(वेदार्थसंग्रहे महाभारतवचनम्)
(ग्रा) न च कालविक्रमः ।
(इ) न यत्र कालोऽनिमित्वां परः प्रभुः ।
(भागवतम् २, ६, १०)
(भागवतम् २, २, १७)

139. अल्पास्त्वरस्वर्गादीननुभूय पुनः पुनर्निवर्त्तन्ते (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ६, २१)

140. तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां मत्प्राप्तिलक्षणं योगमपुनरावृतिरूपं क्षेमं च वहामि ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ६, २२)

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

God, the Supreme Person—The points of difference between the Teṅgalai and the Vadagalai sects—A comparative study—Gotama and Rāmānuja—Kaṇāda and Rāmānuja—Patañjali and Rāmānuja—Vasiṣṭha and Rāmānuja—Saṅkara and Rāmānuja—Casual deviation, a bird's eye view—A resume of Rāmānuja's views.

God, the Supreme Person

A careful study of the Vedas may bring out the truth that the Vedic religion was a theistic one. The sages believed in the existence of God as father and the creator and omniscient ruler of the universe.¹ The gāyatrī which is regarded as the quintessence of the four Vedas embodies a devotional attitude towards God conceived as the Creator to whom one should pray for the promotion of wisdom. The various extant religions of the world, no matter whether they agree with or differ from one another in details, are based on that very devotional attitude which characterised the Vedic religion.

Atheism also has had its tradition. The Indian systems of philosophy founded by Cārvaka, Mahāvīra, Kapīla and Jaimini are indeed atheistic in outlook. They did not admit the necessity of postulating the existence of God for explaining the origin of the universe or the possibility of the cessation of the pain and misery and suffering of mankind.

Ultimate Reality may be conceived in any of the following ways :

1. as Impersonal and unembodied (Nirguṇa—Nirākara).
2. as Personal and unembodied (Saguṇa—Nirākara).
3. as Personal and embodied (Saguṇa—Sākara),

Saṅkara is one of those who admit the first alternative. For him, Brahman is both impersonal and unembodied. According to Advaita Vedānta, the personal and embodied God is not ultimately real. The conception of the Unmanifested Logos of Theosophy is akin to that of the unconditioned Brahman of Advaita.²

According to religions such as Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism and Sikhism, God is the Ultimate Reality and He is personal but formless. Rāmānuja agrees with those religions in regarding God as the Ultimate Reality, but differs from them, holding that He is possessed of a personal form.

Now personality comprises certain attributes or characteristics. According to Edwin Greaves, 'some of the main elements in a Christian conception of God are personality, love, holiness, righteousness, omnipotence, wisdom, mercy and grace'.³ According to Islam, 'God is omnipresent, omnipotent, unborn, uncreated, invisible, unique, peerless, illimitable, sportive, merciful, just, formless and immutable'.⁴ The Zoroastrian God is Datar-Ahura-Mazda : 'He is most mindful of the deeds of men and demons and a Discerner and final arbiter of all things. He is the bestower of blessings and creator of all'.⁵ According to Sikhism, 'God Himself created the world and Himself gave names to things He made by His power.' Professor John B. Noss says about God in Sikhism that 'He is eternally one, sovereign and omnipotent God'.⁶ God, according to the Aryasamājist faith founded by Svami Dayānanda, is truth, consciousness, bliss, formless, omnipotent, just, merciful, unborn, infinite, immutable, beginningless, matchless, supporter of all, lord of all, all-pervading, immanent, unaging, immortal, fearless, eternal, holy and creator.⁷ The Brahmasamājists, likewise, conceive God as 'the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe.' A personal being with sublime moral attributes, God, according to them, is not, however, incarnate, and yet hears, and responds to, prayers.⁸

Like these theistic religions, Rāmānuja conceives God as the Supreme Person ; but his approach to Ultimate Reality is unique in that it is aesthetic. For him, God is not only the Supreme Person but also has the most beautiful form. Most of the Vaiṣṇava apostles agree with Rāmānuja in this respect, though they differ from him in many details.

*The Points of Difference Between the Tengalai and the Vadagalai Sects of Viśiṣṭādvaita regarding the nature of God and the allied subjects*⁹

Below are given eighteen cardinal points of difference between the northern or Vadagalai and the southern or Tengalai sects of Viśiṣṭādvaita. I am putting down two alternatives in an interrogative form on each point. In each case, a reply in the affirmative to the first alternative would represent the Tengalai view and a

similar reply to the second would bring out the view of the *Vadagai*.

1. Grace of God. Is it spontaneous and independent, or does it depend upon the efforts of the devotee?

2. Emancipation. Is it a gain to God or to the individual soul?

and

Does the bliss involved in emancipation admit of grades or is free from them?

3. Ways of approaching God. Are they five, viz., duty, knowledge, devotion to God, surrender to God and devotion to the religious guide or only two viz., devotion to God and surrender to Him?

4. Pervasion of *Sri*. Is She atomic like a finite soul or pervasive like *Viṣṇu*?

5. Granting of salvation. Does *Sri* only recommend to the Deity a devotee for salvation or does She also grant it?

6. God's love of the finite soul. Is it an attitude of relishing the faults of a devotee, or is it that of ignoring them?

7. Mercy of God. Does it consist in the actual suffering on the part of God out of sympathy for the suffering individual, or does it consist in His desire to remove the suffering of the individual soul?

8. Surrender. Is it a devotee's correct knowledge of his relation to the Supreme, or does it mean an additional self-surrendering activity on his part?

9. The definition of a resigned soul (*prapanna*). Is he one who has merely studied the *Prabandhas*, or is he one who takes to the path of surrender, being unable to follow other ways?

10. The duties. Are they to be given up, or are they to be performed by a *prapanna*?

11. Compatibility of other ways with surrender. Are other ways e.g. the acquisition of knowledge and the performance of duties incompatible with surrender or are they compatible with surrender?

12. Performance of duties. Is it optional for a man of God for the sake of *loka-saṅgraha*, or is it compulsory for the pleasure of God?

13. The accessories of surrender. Can some of them be adopted to the exclusion of the rest, or is it obligatory to practise all of them?

14. Cause of emancipation. Is God the only cause, or is prapatti also one?

15. Expiation. Is it unnecessary for a prapanna to atone for a sin, or is it necessary for him to do so?

16. The status of a devotee of a low caste. Is he to be revered as a brāhmaṇa, or is he to be accorded proper respect only?

17. The nature of God's relation to the individual soul. Is God internally related to the finite souls, or is His contact with them only external?

18. Isolation or kaivalya. Does one who attains kaivalya attain the stage of eternity, or is the eternal stage attained in Vaikunṭha?

The above questionnaire is in consonance with Dr. S. Dasgupta's treatment of the subject. A little variant is the treatment of Shri A. Govindācārya who has also mentioned five additional points of difference.¹⁰ I would personally like to add to the list only one more, viz. on the question of the nature of Śuddha-satīva. Lokācārya, a Tengalai, takes it to be inert, whereas Venkaṭanātha, a Vadagalai holds it to be non-inert.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Gotama and Rāmānuja

Gotama, the author of the Nyāya-sūtra did not say much about God. In fact, the importance of God in the philosophy of Gotama is not very great. According to him, an individual can attain salvation by means of knowledge which does not, however, specifically refer to God. It is not clear whether Gotama regarded God as creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe. He only characterised Him as the dispenser of the fruits of man's actions.¹¹ The later exponents of Nyāya have, however, tried to prove the existence of God by various kinds of arguments. The main trend of their argument is as follows.¹²

An effect must have a cause. When we see an earthen pot, we naturally argue the existence of a potter—its efficient cause. Similarly, the universe being of the nature of an effect, we can infer the existence of its creator. There is then the teleological argument. When we observe a machine consisting of parts well adjusted to one another, we think of an intelligent mechanic. Likewise, the well-

planned scheme of the world comprising the regular rising and setting of the sun and the moon, the regular occurrence of days, nights and seasons etc., indicates that there must be an intelligent creator of the world. According to *sarva-siddhānta-saṅgraha*, God of *Nyāya* possesses three attributes—intelligence, volition and activity.¹³ *Viśvanātha* has ascribed five more, *viz.* number etc., to Him.

Unlike *Nyāya*, Rāmānuja holds that God, the abode of myriad of auspicious attributes cannot be proved by arguments. For him, perception and inference are alike inadequate to prove His existence. He, therefore, depends in this matter upon the testimony of the scriptures which declare that God creates, preserves and destroys the universe periodically, dispenses the fruits of actions performed by finite souls, is possessed of a form, and so on.

Kaṇāda and Rāmānuja

Kaṇāda has not explicitly mentioned God in his aphorisms. According to *Vaiśeṣika* commentators, however, his aphorisms 2. 1. 18. and 19 hint at the existence of God.¹⁴ Things in the world have names such as the sun, moon, water and air, which indicates that some one assigned these names to them. But who could do so? The reply of the followers of Kaṇāda is : God gave these names to the objects of the world. It is due to the will of God that in the beginning the atoms of air stirred, and as a result, air was formed and moved in the space. Similarly, the atoms of light, water and earth were set to work by the Divine will to form themselves respectively into light, water and earth. Then the world came into shape and Brahmā was born therein. This view in brief is the view of Praśastapāda, the famous commentator on the *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra*.

It is thus clear that there is very little material on which we can base our estimate of Kaṇāda's conception of God. But Rāmānuja has offered us an elaborate account of his own conception of God as the Supreme Personal Being endowed with a form and divine auspicious qualities.

Patañjali and Rāmānuja

According to Patañjali, God is a unique omniscient soul, the teacher of the ancients, ever free from five-fold miseries, the two-fold action, its fruit and the *vāsanā*. The repetition of OM, which is His name, is said to result in the removal of all troubles and the realization of the self. One can succeed in trance through devotion to God.

Patañjali's treatment of God is too inadequate to throw any light on the question of God's relation to the physical universe and the individual souls. God is not even regarded by him as omnipotent, omnipresent creator of the world, nor as the dispenser of the fruits of actions of the living beings. Though endowed with superior qualities, He is simply one of the many souls in the universe. The final aim of yogic practices is not the realization of God. It is, on the other hand, the realization of the self. The yogi is advised to resort to devotion to God for the sake of samādhi.¹⁵ Besides, devotion to God is held by Patañjali to be only one of the five means to this end and that too of a lower order.¹⁶ Patañjali is also silent on the question as to whether God has a form. Both Patañjali and Rāmānuja indeed agree in ascribing personality to God. But the latter's conception of the Divine personality is decidedly fuller and clearer than the former's. Again, both yoga and Visiṣṭādvaita agree on the admission of the individuality of the finite soul both in the empirical state and the state of emancipation. But the former does not so unambiguously hold as does the latter, that the emancipated soul fully enjoys bliss. Furthermore, the Yoga doctrine of the isolation of the finite soul is too dreary to be acceptable to the human mind, whereas the Visiṣṭādvaita ideal of bliss in communion with God is most attractive to the religious man.

Vasiṣṭha and Rāmānuja

Both Vasiṣṭha and Rāmānuja admit an all-embracing Reality behind the variety in the world. But they differ in their views regarding that Reality. The former holds that the relation between the one and the many is that of identity, whereas, according to the latter, it is analogous to that relation which subsists between a soul and its body. Again, both differ on many other points some of which are as follows.

According to Vasiṣṭha, it is Brahmi who creates the cosmos¹⁷, but Rāmānuja holds that it is Brahman that creates the cosmic egg of which Brahmi is the first-born.¹⁸

Vasiṣṭha maintains that all creation is novel and it is so in the sense that it is not determined by any previous Karma.¹⁹ Rāmānuja, on the other hand, holds that no creation is absolutely novel because the jivas created by God owe their characteristic peculiarities to their karmas in previous kalpas.²⁰

The objective world, according to Vasiṣṭha, is an ideal construction of the mind and so is inseparable from the mind that creates

it.²¹ But Rāmānuja completely differs from such an idealistic view of the world as is evident from his commentary to the *Brahma-sūtra* 2.2.27.²²

Vasiṣṭha regards wish-fulfilment as the cause of dreams, whereas Rāmānuja holds that the cause is nothing but the will of God.

Vasiṣṭha holds that the objects of common experience as well as we ourselves as individual souls are the contents of the Cosmic Mind. The universe is, as previously seen, the imaginative creation (*kalpaṇa*) of Brahmā. But what is of greater importance is that every objective content in the world as created by Cosmic Imagination is, in its turn, a subjective source of further creation of objects and that this process goes on endlessly. The countless contents of the universe have their own objective worlds, and the process of the worlds, as Dr. Atreya explains, goes on ad infinitum.²³ The conception of the world within worlds is an original contribution of Vasiṣṭha to the thought of Indian Philosophy. Obviously, therefore, no trace of it is found in the philosophy of Rāmānuja.

One must experience pleasure and pain consequent on one's past actions which have begun to fructify in this life (*prārabdha*), and a man of devotion or knowledge is no exception to the rule. This is the view of Rāmānuja, shared by Śaṅkara. But Vasiṣṭha differs from Rāmānuja in that the former holds that *prārabdha* can be overcome by the strong will of the individual.

Vasiṣṭha emphasizes that *jñāna* is the only means to liberation and deprecates *bhakti* which, as he declares, suits only those who are ignorant unable to think rightly, to make a right effort and to read the scriptures.²⁴ Rāmānuja, on the other hand, is a strong advocate of *bhakti* which, according to him, results in the soul's emancipation.²⁵

Vasiṣṭha's advice is that every man should depend upon none but himself for his salvation,²⁶ whereas, according to Rāmānuja, dependence on God is the most effective means to emancipation.²⁷

The divine form of Viṣṇu (holding Pāñcajanya, Sudarśana, Kaumodakī etc., in hands) is the highest (*para*) aspect of Brahman,²⁸ according to Rāmānuja, whereas it is but secondary (*gauṇa*) on the view of Vasiṣṭha.²⁹

According to Vasiṣṭha, liberation of the individual consists in its loss of individuality and also its absorption in the Absolute.³⁰ But Rāmānuja holds that it consists in transcending the world of experi-

ence in Ekapād-vibhuti and in attaining communion or fellowship with God in Nitya-vibhuti.³¹

There is absolutely no doubt that Vasiṣṭha's views are entirely based upon original thinking, whereas Rāmānuja arrives at all his views through his own interpretation of the scriptures.

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja

According to Śaṅkara, Ultimate Reality has two phases—transcendent (para) and empirical (apara). The former is devoid of all particularities of names and forms which are held to be due to Avidyā, whereas the latter is characterised by these. It is the lower or empirical aspect of Brahman which is called Iṣvara. Iṣvara has a form made of Śuddha-sattva which in later literature on Advaita is called Māyā.

But Rāmānuja does not admit the two aspects of Brahman. For him Brahman and Iṣvara are the same. The Ultimate Reality is both endowed with, and devoid of, attributes. The Nirguṇa Brahman, according to Rāmānuja, is God as devoid of all imperfections. The Saguṇa Brahman is again God as possessed of divine attributes such as bliss, omniscience, omnipotence as well as the divine form which is 'svarūpa-bhūta'.

Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja agree in regarding God (Iṣvara) as creator of the world and as the dispenser of the fruits of actions performed by individual human beings. Again, both believe in God's manifestation (avatāra) and image-worship. For Śaṅkara, devotion is an auxiliary means to the attainment of knowledge which alone is the means to salvation in the strictest sense. According to him, devotion itself can lead the soul to Personal God only. For Rāmānuja, however, on the other hand, knowledge is an auxiliary to devotion which leads the soul to God, and helps its realization of God which is the only salvation.

Casual Deviation—A Bird's-eye View

A few facts have already been pointed in various places of this work. They, along with some more, are given below:—

Dr. A. B. Keith

He holds that the *Vedānta-dīpa*, the *Vedānta-sāra* and the *Vedārtha-saṅgraha* are Rāmānuja's independent works.³² But the truth is that the *Vedānta-dīpa* and the *Vedānta-sāra* are not

Rāmānuja's independent works. They are commentaries to the *Brahma-sūtra*.

Dr. L. D. Barnett

He observes that 'Rāmānuja's teaching, set forth in his commentaries upon the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Brahma-sūtra*, and several *Upaniṣads*, as well as in many other works, is commonly called *Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda*'.³³ The statement is partially wrong in view of the fact that Rāmānuja wrote no commentary upon any of the *Upaniṣads*.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

He has stated that "The God in man is like a flash of lightning in the heart of a blue cloud".³⁴ But what Rāmānuja really means is that the Deity residing in the heart is like a blue cloud encircled by lightning on all sides.

2. Preparations for *bhakti* viz. *viveka* etc., according to Radhakrishnan, are eleven in number.³⁵ But the correct view is that they are seven only.

Dr. M. N. Sircar

He observes: "We confess we cannot understand what kind of substance Rāmānuja's *Śuddha-sattva* is".³⁶ But the truth is that Rāmānuja has never discussed the nature of *Śuddha-sattva*, nor has he mentioned anywhere that God's form is made of this substance.

Dr. Roma Bose

1. She says: 'Rāmānuja speaks of three kinds of the non-sentient viz. *prakṛti* or matter, *kāla* or time, and *Śuddha-sattva* or pure matter'.³⁷ But the fact is that Rāmānuja does not hold this view. He has nowhere mentioned *Śuddha-sattva* as separate entity besides matter and time.

2. Further, her statement that 'there is not a single mention of Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa in Rāmānuja's works'³⁸ is not correct because Rāmānuja has mentioned Kṛṣṇa in his own works as is evident from his commentary on the *Gītā* 4. 4.³⁹ and 18. 78.⁴⁰

3. Equally untenable is her statement that 'according to Rāmānuja, *bhakti*.....arises from six essential pre-requisites';⁴¹ for Rāmānuja has admitted not six but seven of these essential pre-requisites.

Mm Gauri Śāṅkara Hīrācanda Ojhā

1. While this writer holds that according to Rāmānuja, Brahman is only the efficient cause of the world,⁴² the truth is that Rāmānuja

himself regarded Brahman as both the efficient and the material cause of the world.

2. It is a mistake to characterise Rāmānuja's system as Bhedābheda or Dvaitādvaita as this author has done,⁴³ because Rāmānuja's system is, really, Viśiṣṭādvaita.

3. Nor can Rāmānuja's Śrī-bhāṣya be called, as he calls it, a commentary on the Vedānta-sūtra and the Gītā and the Upaniṣads.⁴⁴ For his Śrī-bhāṣya is a commentary only to the Vedānta-sūtra. His commentary on the Gītā does not come within his Śrī-bhāṣya. And he never wrote any commentary on any of the Upaniṣads.

Dr. Rāma Kumāra Varmā

1. The following statement of this writer is not correct: That an aspirant cannot at once realize God's final phase *viz.* Arcāvatāra.⁴⁵ As we have already seen, it is not 'Arcā' but 'Para' which is, according to Rāmānuja, the final phase of God.

2. His statement that the aspirant eventually realizes the Para and the Vyūha phases of God, residing in his own heart,⁴⁶ is not correct. For it is Antaryāmin, and not Para nor Vyūha, that resides in the hearts of the finite souls. Para is God in Vaikuṇṭha and the three forms of Vyūha are respectively related to the universe as its creator, sustainer and destroyer.

Śrī Śantanu Vihārī Dvivedī

That Rāmānuja has mentioned the name of the Bhāgavata and has referred to its 18 thousand stanzas in his Vedārtha-saṅgraha⁴⁷ is not correct inasmuch as Rāmānuja has not done so.

Hindi Śabda Sāgara

1. The soul is related to God as a ray is related to the sun, according to Rāmānuja.⁴⁸ But the relation, both according to Rāmānuja and his followers, is that of body and soul.

2. Similarly wrong is the statement that Viśiṣṭādvaita is also Bhedābheda or Dvaitādvaita.⁴⁹ The fact is that the Bhedābheda or the Dvaitādvaita was preached by Nimbārka.

A Resume of Rāmānuja's Views

The only unfailing proof of God is scriptural testimony according to which He has certain characteristics. He is not undifferentiated and unqualified consciousness of the Advaita School, but is full of auspicious qualities such as truth, knowledge, bliss, purity and infinity. There is in Him myriad of other supernatural attributes such

as omnipresence, omnipotence, mercy and grace. Rāmānuja calls his God by the name of Viṣṇu. Other names such as Parama-puruṣa, Nārāyaṇa, Brahman and Vāsudeva are only synonyms of Viṣṇu.

The changes which we observe in the world do not belong to the essential nature of God but to matter which God upholds from within and without as its immanent ruler. God is similarly immanent in each and every individual soul. Immanence is not identity; hence both matter and individual souls are related to God as His 'Śeṣa'. As one who is immanent in the entire creation, God is called Antaryāmin and Śeṣin.

The universe whose diversity and vastness are bewildering to the human mind is kept under control by an infinitesimal portion of Divine Power. Out of mere sport, He engages Himself in various activities such as creation, preservation and dissolution. As controller of souls, mind and ego, He is called Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha respectively.

Having set the universe at work, God watches the process therein as a looker-on (Sākṣi). At times He appears, out of His own will, in special manifestations such as Rāma and Krṣṇa, to punish the wicked, to reward the pious, and to establish moral order in the universe.

The Divine form is not adventitious or accidental as are the bodies of individual souls—terrestrial or celestial. Nor is it made of matter made up of the three constituents—sattva, rajas and tamas. Nor can it be said to be composed of predominant material sattva (prakṛṭa sattva) as the system of Yoga and the doctrine of Tri-murti would hold, or of exclusive sattva (Śuddha-sattva) as is held by Advaita of Saṅkara. Rāmānuja had not, however, raised, as his followers did, the question as to whether the divine form is inert or non-inert. According to him, it is only super-natural being as essential to, and inherent in, God's nature as are His attributes such as bliss and consciousness. His form is His eternal, essential manifestation; and Śrī is inseparable from Him. Even the forms assumed by God in various āvataras are 'a-prakṛṭa'.

One can realize God through meditation on the true nature of one's ownself as imperishable, undefinable and indiscernible. Those who belong to the cult of Pañcāgni taught in the Upaniṣads can attain Brahman. But such meditation is really very difficult for those for whom it is difficult to rise above the view of the ātman as identical with the body. The essential nature of the finite soul is hidden from it. The way of deliverance from this state is resigna-

tion of all including the self to the Deity. Such resignation gives the religious aspirant the opportunity to cultivate love of God. All are entitled to love Him. There is no restriction of caste, colour, creed or sex in this matter. The acquisition of knowledge and performance of action as well as the pursuance of the seven expedients—discrimination of purity in food etc.—promote devotion. Rāmānuja attaches greatest importance to the dāsyā type of love and holds that service is 'knowledge of Brahman' (Brahma-vidyā).

Rāmānuja admits that he has knowingly concealed the details of the doctrine of surrender even in his vast commentary on the Brahma-sūtra. He has, however, disclosed it in the Gadya-traya which is probably his last religio-philosophical work.

Release from worldly life does not bring about the loss of individuality as it does on the Advaita view. It is, in fact, the fullest realization on the part of the individual of God's immanence in him. The essential nature of the self which was lying latent or partly manifest in him under the influence of action now becomes completely manifest in the state of emancipation. It is not 'isolation' in the sense of Kapila or Patañjali, which consists in the maintenance of individuality without the enjoyment of bliss. Nor is it a state of mere cessation of pain as admitted by Gotama⁵⁰ and Kapāda.⁵¹ The apavarga of the former or the mokṣa of the latter makes no room for consciousness in the state of emancipation; hence either has been aptly described as a condition resembling a pebble. Śriharṣa has humorously dubbed Gotama as a simpleton on the ground that the latter conceives of salvation as an intelligent person's becoming stony or stupefied.⁵² For Rāmānuja, release consists in the realization of God and so is a state where action has no sway, knowledge knows no bounds and bliss of devotional communion with God is positive and perpetual.⁵³

References

1. (अ) य इमा विश्वा भुवनानि ज्ञात्वा ऋषिहोता न्ययीदत् पिता नः ।
(ऋग्वेद १०, ८१, १)
(ग्रा) यो नः पिता जनिता यो विद्याता धामानि वेद भुवनानि विश्वा ।
(ऋग्वेद १०, ८२, ३)
2. Theosophy Explained : Page 51.

3. The Christian Conception of God—an article by Edwin Greaves in the Kalyana-Kalpataru, Vol I, No 1, Pages 173-177.
4. God in Islam—an article by Syed Kasim Ali (*Ibid*) pages 184-5
5. Zoroastrian Theism—an article by Erward K. S. Dabu (*Ibid*) pages 189-191.
6. The Religions of India by J. B. Noss, page 278.
7. Hindutva by Rama Dasa Gaura, page 750.
8. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics Vol. 2.
9. Based on Dr. Dasgupta's treatment of the subject in his History of Indian philosophy, Vol. III.
10. The journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1910, article XXIV.
11. ईश्वरः कारणं पुरुषकर्मकल्प-दर्शनात् । (न्यायसूत्र ४, १, १६)
12. यथा घटादिकार्यं कर्तृजन्यं तथा कित्यं कुरादिकमपि । न च तत्कर्तृत्वमस्मदादीनां सम्भवतीत्यतस्तत्कर्तृत्वेनेश्वर-सिद्धिः । (मुक्तावली १)
13. इच्छाज्ञान-प्रयत्नारूप्या महेश्वरगुणास्त्रयः । (सर्वसिद्धान्त-संग्रहः, पृष्ठ २८)
14. संज्ञा-कर्म त्वस्मद्द्विग्निष्ठानां लिङम् ॥] (वैशेषिकसूत्रम् १, १, १८, १६) प्रत्यक्षप्रवृत्तत्वात् संज्ञाकर्मणः ॥
15. (ग्र) समाधिसिद्धिरीश्वरप्रणिधानात् (योगसूत्रम् २, ४५)
(आ) ईश्वर-प्रणिधानाद्वा । (योगसूत्रम् १, २, ३)
16. शोच-सन्तोष-तपः-स्वाध्यायेश्वर-प्रणिधानानि नियमाः । (योगसूत्रम् २, ३२)
17. संकल्पयति यन्नाम प्रव्यमोऽसौ प्रजापतिः । तत्तदेवाशु भवति तस्येदं कल्पनं जगत् । (योगवाशिष्ठ ३, १८६। ६५)
18. चतुर्मुखस्यचाण्डे सम्भवः स्मर्यते तस्मिन्नन्धेभवद् ब्रह्मा सर्वलोक-पितामह इति (श्रीभाष्यम् २, ४, १७)
19. (ग्र) अपूर्वं एव स्वप्नोऽप्यं यद् वै सर्गोनुभूयते । (योगवाशिष्ठ ३। १३। ४२)
(आ) सर्गादौ प्रावतनं कर्म विद्यते नेह कस्यचित् । (पूर्वोक्तम् ३, १४२। २६)
20. (ग्र) स भगवान् पुरुषोत्तमः प्रत्यावसानवमये पूर्वसंसानं जगत् स्मरन् वहु स्यामिति संकल्प्य भोग्यमोक्तुजातं स्वस्मिन् शक्ति-मात्रावदेषं प्रलीनं विभज्य । (श्रीभाष्यम् १, ३, २६)
(आ) सूज्यमान-देवादिक्षेत्रज्ञ-कर्मसापेक्षत्वाद् विषमसृष्टेः । (श्रीभाष्यम् २, १, ३४)
तुलनाथं शांकरभाष्यमयिः—
प्रलीयमानमपि चेदं जगत् शक्त्यवदेषमेव प्रलीयते । शक्तिमूलमेव च प्रभवति । इतरथाऽस्त्रिमिकत्व-प्रसंगात् । (ब्रह्मसूत्रे शांकरभाष्यम् १, ३, ३१)
21. मनोविजृम्भणमिदं संसार इति सम्मतम् । (योगवाशिष्ठ ४, ४७, ४८)

22. अतो विज्ञानिमात्रमेव तत्वं न बोहार्योऽस्तीत्येन प्राप्ते प्रचक्षमहे नाभाव उपलब्धे-
रिति ज्ञानव्यतिरिक्तस्यार्थस्याभावो वचनुं न शब्दयते । (श्रीभाष्यम् २, २, २७)

23. (अ) The Philosophy of the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha, Page 66.
(ग्रा) सर्गे सर्गे पृथग् रूपं सन्ति सगन्तिराणपि ।
तेष्वप्यन्तस्य सगौधाः कदलीदलपीठवत् (योगविशिष्ठ ४, १८, १७)

24. (अ) निवर्णिं नाम परमं सुखं येन पुनर्जनेः ।
न जायते न नियते तत् ज्ञानादेव लभ्यते ॥
(योगवाशिष्ठ २, १०, २१)

(ग्रा) शास्त्र-यत्न-विचारेभ्यो मूर्खणां प्रपत्नायिनाम् ।
कल्पिता वैष्णवी भक्षितः प्रवृत्यर्थं शुभस्थितौ ॥
(योगवाशिष्ठ ५, ४३, २०)

25. अनविकातिशयभक्त्या मां प्राप्नोति । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १८, ५५)

26. आराध्यात्मनात्मानमात्मनात्मानमचंयेत् ।
आत्मनात्मानमालोक्य संतिष्ठस्वात्मनात्मनि ॥
(योगवाशिष्ठ ५, ४३, १८)

27. ये मामुपासते तेषाम् ग्रहम् अविरेणुं व कालेन समुद्दर्त्ता भवानि ।
(गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् १२, ७)

28. (अ) स्वानुरूपासंब्लेयाचिन्त्यदक्षित-नित्यनिरवद्यनिरतिशय-कल्याण-दिव्यायुधः
परं ब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तमो नारायणः । (गीताभाष्यभूमिका)

(ग्रा) वंशचक्रगदासि ॥ ग्रन्थंकृतः परब्रह्म नारायणः । (वेदार्थसंग्रहः पृष्ठम् २४८)

29. शंखचक्रगदाहस्तो गौण-आकार आत्मनः । (योगविशिष्ठ ५, ४३, २७)

30. (अ) यत् किविदिदमाभाति भातं भानमुपैष्यति,
कालवयगतं हश्यं तदसौ सर्वमेव च ।
मुक्तिरेपोच्यते राम ब्रह्मतत् समुदाहृतम्,
निर्वाणमेतत् कवितं पूरणात् पूरणंतराकृति ॥ (योगवाशिष्ठ ३, ६, २३-२४)

31. समस्तकार्यकारणुजातमतीत्य परमव्योमशब्दाभिषेये लक्ष्मादीनां वाह्मनसागोचरे
श्रीमति वैकुण्ठे दिव्यलोके । (वैकुण्ठगच्छम्)

32. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, page 572.

33. Bhagvad-gītā published by J. M. Dent, preface, page 56.

34. Indian philosophy, Vol. II, page 690.

35. Ibid, page 704.

36. Comparative Studies in Vedāntism, page 45.

37. Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha of Nimbārka expounded by Dr. Roma
Bose : Vol. III, page 180.

38. Ibid, page 180.

39. कृष्ण एव हि लोकानामुत्पत्ति प्रभवाप्ययः—इत्येवमादिषु कृष्णस्य हि कृते इति
कृष्णस्य शेषभूतमिदं जगदित्यर्थः । (गीतायां रामानुजभाष्यम् ४, ४)

40. यत्र हृष्णो वसुदेवसूनु धंत्र च पार्थो धनुर्धरः । (पूर्वोक्तम् १८, ७८)
 (प्रपि च) ज्ञानवलेश्वर्य-वैर्यं गविततेजसां निधेमंगवतः हृष्णात् । (पूर्वोक्तम् १८, ७५)

41. Vedānta-Pārijāta-Saurabha of Nimbārka expounded by Dr. Roma Bose : Vol. III, page 181.

42. Madhya-Kālīna Bhāratīya Saṃskṛti, page 97.

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*

45. Hindi Sāhitya Kā Alocanātmaka Itihāsa, page 298.

46. *Ibid.*

47. The Kalyāṇa, Bhāgavata number, page 57.

48. Hindi Sabda Sāgara, Vol. IV, page 3189.

49. *Ibid.*

50. (ग) वाधना-लक्षणं दुःखम् (न्यायसूत्रम् १, १, २१)
 (आ) तदत्यन्तविमोक्षोऽपवर्गः । (न्यायसूत्रम् १, १, २२)

51. (ग) आत्मेन्द्रियमनोर्बंसन्निकर्यात् सुखदुःखे (वैशेषिकसूत्रम् ५, २, १५)
 (आ) तदभावे संयोगभावो प्रादुर्भावित्वं मोक्षः । (वैशेषिकसूत्रम् ५, २, १६)

52. मुक्तये यः शिलात्वाय शास्त्रमूचे सचेतसाम् ।
 गोतमं तमवेक्षयैव यथा वित्य तथैव सः ॥ (नैषधीयचरितम् १७, ७५)

53. न चोच्छ्रुत्वकम्र्मवन्धस्यासंकुचितज्ञानस्य परब्रह्मकानुभवस्वभावस्य तदेकप्रियस्यानवधिकातिशयानन्दं ब्रह्मानुभवतोऽन्यापेक्षा । (श्रीभाष्यम् ४, ४, २२)

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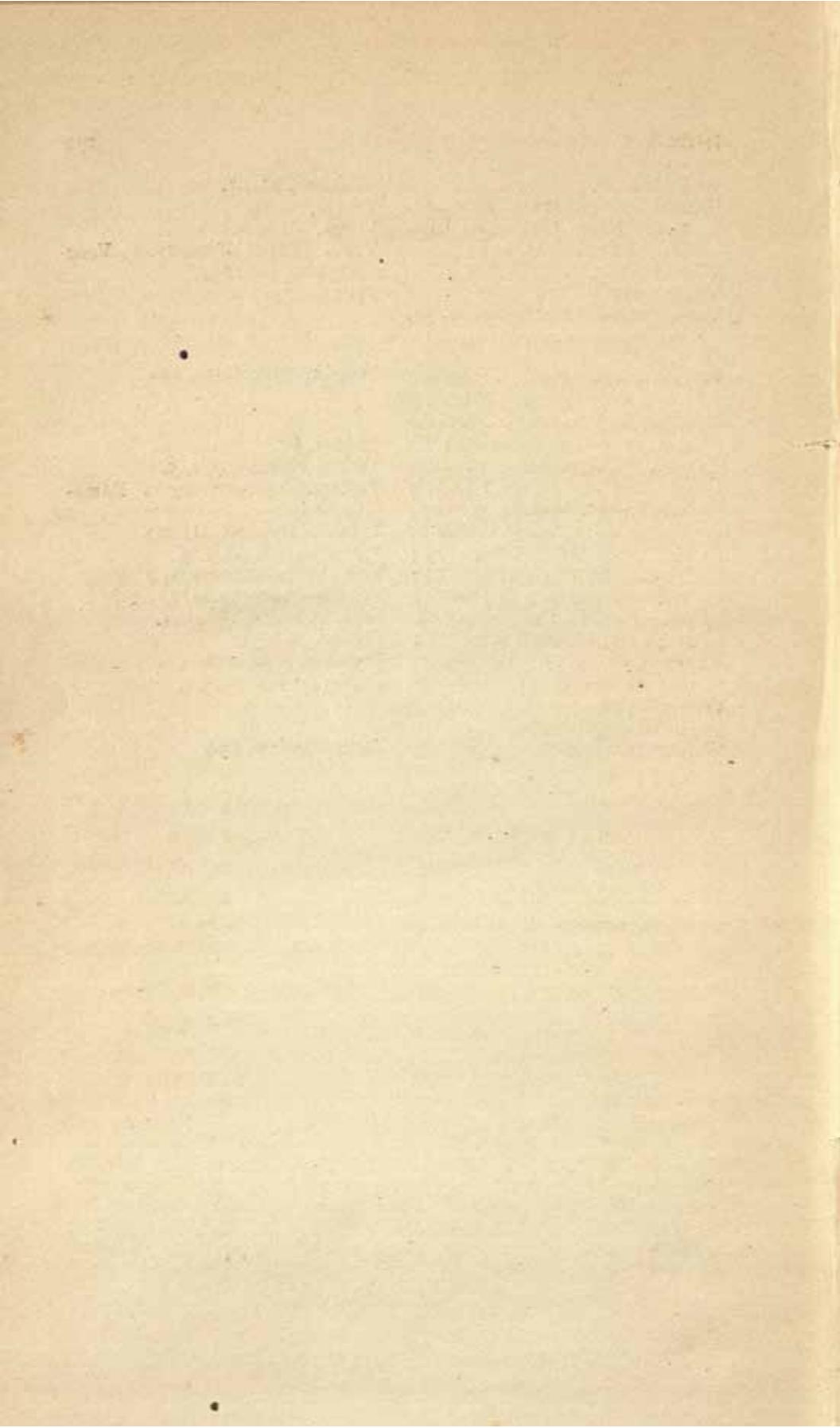
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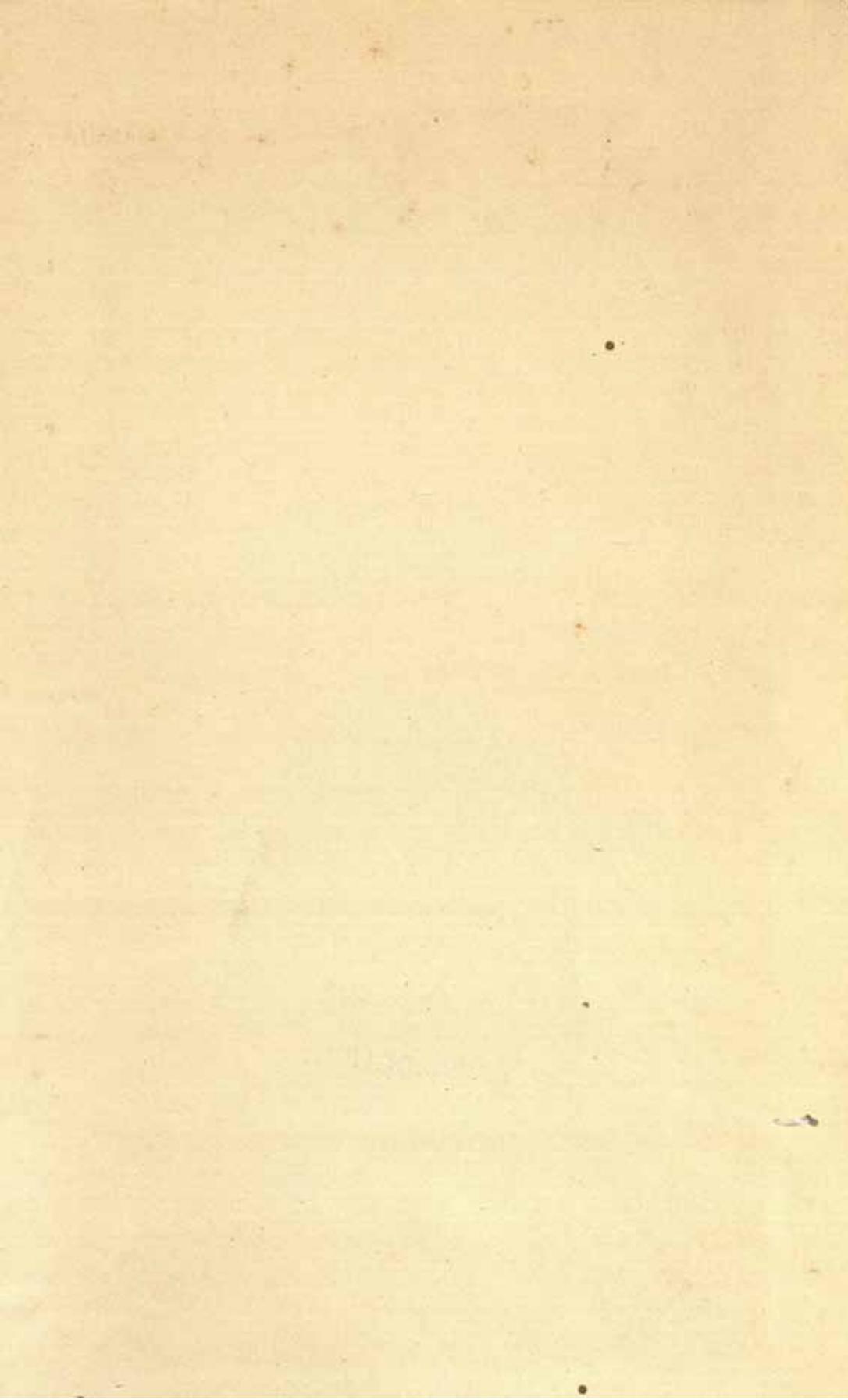




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13	2	अभूव	वभूव
14	12	ond	and
22	25	धीमताम्	धीमताम्
23	23	दाव्यमाने	दीव्यमाने
24	18	ताक्ष्यं	ताक्ष्यं
24	28	Conjecverum	Conjeeverum
35	20	तद्वचना	तद्वचना
42	22	ond	and
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50	31	त्रिम्य	त्रिम्य
60	35	प्रवृत्यनु	प्रवृत्यनु
61	29	प्राणात्यये	प्राणात्यये
62	15	मुत्पत्त्यादिका	मुत्पत्त्यादिका
66	23	relatton	relation
73	26	अनुकृत्य	अनुकृत्य
83	9	यज्ञो	यज्ञो
84	26	चेतवनैक	चेतनैक
89	2	Macdonall	Macdonell
102	7	abidcs	abides
102	9	mediate	meditate
103	3	पिण्डं	पिण्डं
105	4	लक्ष्या	लक्ष्या
105	20	दध्रे	दध्रे
105	27	सुपृति	सुखुति
111	17	furnance	furnace
112	6	as old as old	as old
112	15	Sinha	Simha

Page	Line	Incorrect	Correct
113	24	alteted	altered
116	1	अरतीपु	अरणीपु
118	33	Him	Him'
124	34	nevsr	never
125	10	thd	the
127	23	afflication	affliction
128	2	possess	possesses
128	6	Naaāyana	Nārāyana
128	29	Viṣṇa	Viṣṇu
129	13	वाढं	वाढं
129	33	व्यावृतस्य	व्यावृतस्य
129	35	प्रतिविधं	प्रतिविधं
138	19	Here	Hers
142	20	cnn	can
149	26	थ्रेयः	थ्रीः
150	14	पुराणम्	पुराणम्
151	7	heavenly	heavenly
153	16	intersting	interesting
162	3	af	of
162	4	suports	supports
184	1	उभय कर्मित	उभयपरिकर्मित
188	1	S	the
193	30	तत्त	तत्ते
196	4	couch	conch
201	36	destitude	destitute
205	23	सर्वम्यः	सर्वम्यः
206	16	सखीन	सखीन्
206	18	धर्माद्व	धर्माद्वच
209	21, 27	wordly	worldly
210	3, 6, 7	„	„
212	3	„	„
220	12	wlth	with
222	6	enternal	eternal
226	31	सामर्थ्यातच्छेष	सामर्थ्यातच्छेष
228	7	हेतोःतोभंवति	हेतोभंवति
246	1	इस्तीत्येन	इस्तीत्येवं



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